

Hand- Book on Poker



W. J. Florence





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TO
HASSAN H. WHEELER, ESQ.
OF
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

A "GENTLEMAN PLAYER" WHO HAS
ENTERED, PASSED, AND RAISED MANY A

JACK-POT

THIS LITTLE VOLUME

IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED BY

THE AUTHOR

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PREFACE.

AT Eastbourne, on the English coast, one evening in August last some gentlemen sat down to a friendly game of poker. It was urged by one of the party that a book should be written in which the rules governing the game should be succinctly expressed. Some one said it would take a year to complete such a work. Whereupon the writer said it could be done in a month. This led to considerable discussion, and in a bantering manner a bet was proposed and accepted, that it could be written inside of four weeks. This little book is the result of that wager.

W. J. FLORENCE.

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DRAW POKER.

INTRODUCTION.

*"We must speak by the card,
Or equivocation will undo us."*

Hamlet. Act V., Scene 1st.

THE game of Poker has become popular during the last two decades, and is now known in almost every civilized land. I have seen it played by the donkey boys in the streets of Cairo and by the Pi-Ute Indians on the plains of Nevada. I was present on one occasion when a poker party was made up of a reigning monarch, a future king, and three princes imperial. That might well be called a "royal flush."

That the game which could hold such competitors must be a fascinating one cannot be denied. It is indeed held by some to be the most dangerous of all games of cards, since it can only be played for stakes ; but it must be remembered that this is true of all games in which the player conceals the value of the cards he holds.

To the objection that poker is an unsocial game, since it admits of no partners, each participant striving for himself alone, it is to be said that for this very reason poker absorbs its players with a deep fascination. Since one object of the game is to mystify your adversaries as to the value of your hand, and as all sorts of chaff and badinage are permitted, it cannot, after all, be termed an unsociable amusement. Nonsense may fly from tongue to tongue, fast and furious, to any extent, providing it does not delay the game. Then, where a hand shown down detects its owner's late futile attempt to mislead the table a rousing laugh usually follows, so that the fun is always kept up. Of course one may have a bad-tempered or a churlish companion at table ; but such a one usually gets the worst of it when he betrays his peevishness.

As in any game of chance or speculation, there are in poker opportunities to cheat. Long before poker, however, was even invented, cheating at chance games was practiced by the unprincipled. I have seen loaded dice taken from the ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum and now preserved in the Government Museum at Naples ; so poker is not responsible for all the charges brought against it.

It is well, however, to be careful about going into a game of poker on an ocean steamer, in

.....
a railway carriage, or a western hotel without some knowledge of your companions.

But with a party of gentlemen and for limited stakes, poker is a fascinating and harmless pastime. While a number of books have been written about it, none can claim absolute authority, though the rules of the game are really simple. The deviations, alterations, and amended allowances, and the fact that almost any party sitting down to play may and often does make its own rules about certain matters, render poker a by no means easy game. Such rules, for example, as those relating to the value of a "straight," playing "around the corner," "passing the buck," "blazes," and "jack-pots," are predetermined according to the desires of the players. It is to fix the positive and long-accepted statutes of the game that this book is written, the rules herein set forth having been sanctioned by the best custom wherever draw poker is played in its integrity.

An authority on poker says :

"Of all methods of livelihood or dissipation or amusement, perhaps there is none about which so much untruth passes current as about gambling. Every now and then the newspapers take to a run of gaming stories, and it is the exception when one of these has the least element of fact to sustain it. To the mind of a certain

crude reportorial youth, in whose eyes the race-course is a paradise and every turfman a hero, all games of chance possess a peculiar fascination, and if he can fasten to a game of hearsay some individual particular or personal anecdote, he fancies that his fortune is made, and neither thinks nor cares to discriminate in the matter of accuracy or propriety. That there are degrees in card-playing, or varying sensibilities among those who with differing aims play at cards, or any virtue in sticking to the truth, does not occur to him, and as in this, like other fairy tales, it is as easy to speak of millions as of pennies, the amounts at issue are only limited by the imagination of the recountant. Thus: 'The Colonel went him a thousand dollars, and the Judge raised him five thousand better, and the Colonel called, and the Judge only had a pair of deuces, and'—when, if there was any such passage at all, the figures might be reduced to mills—still largely to exceed the amounts actually at stake.

“Again, the writers of these gaming stories seldom have any knowledge of the subject, and, writing at second-hand, fall into the most egregious errors; and their readers, being for the most part equally ignorant, form the most fantastic notions of gambling and of the gambler, both professional and amateur.

“The reputation for gambling long survives

the abandonment of the habit of gambling. It is not generally known, though it is a fact, that the most famous of the nonprofessional gamblers of history, Charles James Fox, did not play for money after his forty-third year, devoting the most of his life to a useful, eminent, and brilliant public service, but never eradicating his early reputation. Indeed, it can be set down as a rule that nothing does its work so quickly and so surely as high play. He who persists in it, no matter how deep his pocket, will soon find the bottom of it ; for the essential principle of gambling is that it shall reach at least the measure of the player's capacity to lose. In most cases it exceeds this, and in all, where it is continued, it outlasts the capacity to pay, involving debt and ruin. Where these are not the finalities among amateurs and men claiming to be gentlemen, the abatement is to be found in an ever-increasing conservatism, narrowing down to merely nominal stakes or counters, and this is the history of every game that does not end in more or less of hardship and disgrace.

“ Of professional gambling it can be said that no avocation involves so much of despotism, fickleness, and squalor. Rare, indeed, are the instances where the professional gambler would not be glad to lead a different life. He will tell you, and truly, that he was not born a gambler ;

that he did not take to gambling for its own sake ; that he drifted into it, as it were, sometimes by mischance in business, sometimes through the encroachments of half-unconscious dissipation, and sometimes from sheer indolence and love of easy and idle pleasure. A murrain on't ! The capacity for real and steady work diminished or gone ; the means of recuperation squandered, confidence forfeited, and reputation tarnished, what was left ? Nothing but the card-table, no longer a magic circle of diversion and abandonment, but the grimy, back-breaking actuality of a defeated life, indefinite, endless, without any beginnings, or objective points, or ambitions that are not vulgar, venal, and corrupt, or victories that are not brutal and base.

“ Yet of all the vices, none is so easy of amendment, as none shows so many illustrations of reform. In the great cities most men have taken a turn at some form of gambling ; few who have not either thrown it off or brought it under regulation and control. Gaming is largely a habit, and a habit of association. It does not, like so many other vices, communicate directly any poison to the blood, though too often leading to those that do. In its origin it is not without a certain manhood and humor, and hence in all ages and among all classes it has had an ex-

istence. But at the very best it is open to the gravest objections.

“It is too absorbing, detaining players beyond their time, and often from the most honorable motives. It is too confining, lacking the pure air and light of day, and permeated by the fetid atmosphere of midnight and tobacco, where it does not descend into the health-destroying fumes of drink. It completely deadens the money-sense, and, in fact, the sense of all values ; and, where carried to the least excess, is a moral crime in exacting something for nothing. I will not add that it is provocative of a great talent for domestic lying, and an incalculable amount of it, because it may be doubted whether the loving wife who listens with moist eyes to the sad story of the sick friend is deceived as much and as often as she pretends to be. Assuredly not in Kentucky, where be sure the women of two or three generations have not lived wholly in vain, and where, in every case, it would be well for the recusant husband to pay no heed to the counsel of the Kentucky journalist, of whom tradition relates that, on a certain occasion, he observed to the friend with whom he was about to separate at the street corner which divided their respective homes : ‘I have always made it a rule, Isaac, to go to my wife and tell her the truth ; it is much the best way, believe me ;

and so, as soon as I get in, I mean to put a bold face on it and frankly say that the press broke down !’

“Fictions like these, however ingenious and maintained, have no power to mislead such ladies as the astute Bluegrass matron, who, after allowing her husband to disrobe in fancied security, and to sit rocking the cradle on the edge of the bed until nearly frozen by the cunning attempt at deception, at last exclaimed : ‘Oh, come on to bed ; the baby ain’t in that cradle !’

“When old Jediah Suggs, the father of the illustrious Simon, having discovered that young hopeful playing cards, undertook to impress the boy with the idea that gambling is a waste of time and money, the embryo Captain of the Tallapoosa Volunteers asked, with more pertinency than depth of thought : ‘Well, whar does the money go, daddy, that everybody loses ?’ In spite of the inability of the elder Mr. Suggs to answer this inquiry, he builded wiser than he knew, and was in the main right in his original proposition.”

A prominent theatrical manager tells this story :

“Henry Wagstaff is breezy, and has a dashy way that no one can resist admiring. I heard of a game of poker he played where he was sadly

caught on a big bluff. He was at the table with Mr. John Dougherty, and several other first-class players. The mere fact that Wagstaff was in the game was sufficient to indicate that big stakes were now and then placed on the table. It was jack-pot poker, and now and then the pot became alarmingly large. But 'Wag' did not grow dizzy, and he bet with cavalier *sang-froid*. The fact is, the great editor's poker nerve is the admiration of thousands of players. His face does not change, no matter if he is betting high on a bobtail flush. Some one opened the jack-pot and Wagstaff and Dougherty came in, each drawing three cards. When it came 'Wag's' time to bet he coolly put up \$100. The jack-pot contained several hundred besides, and no one wanted to give up at once. But the assured way in which the editor put up his bet caused all to drop out except Dougherty.

"He saw the bet and raised it another hundred. Wagstaff never hesitated but went another hundred better. All the others at the table began to feel sorry for Dougherty, for they imagined that the editor had a big winning hand and was drawing his opponent on. After three one-hundred-dollar bets had been made, Dougherty, to the astonishment of those present, called Wagstaff. The latter put his hand on the table and showed that he had been betting

on a pair of deuces. Dougherty raked in something like \$1000 with a pair of sevens. Every one present admired the editor's bluffing nerve, but great praise was bestowed upon Dougherty for his unbounded confidence in a pair of sevens. No one can tell when 'Wag' is bluffing or betting on a big hand, and that is one reason why he is such a great player."

ORIGIN OF THE GAME.

"As sure a card as ever won the set."

Titus Andronicus. Act V., Scene 1st.

Whatever its origin, poker is now conceded to be one of the most intellectual, as it is doubtless the most fascinating, of card games. Attack and defense are in it developed to an amazing perfection, the opportunities of seizing strategic advantage being wonderful. There never was seen such a combination of logic and luck, of calculation and speculation. It has by some been declared the offspring of the famous and difficult English game of "Gleek," which we know to be three hundred years old, while others describe it as a direct development from the English game of "Brag." The derivation of the name from the old English "*pot and vair*" seems fanciful, but the striking analogy between the use of the poker terms "seeing" and "seeing you again," or "raising," and the

“*vying*” and “re-*vying*,” or seeing and re-seeing referred to by Ben Jonson in “Every Man in His Humour” is notable and suggestive.

It would seem by all odds, therefore, to have sprung, like so much of what is best in America, from “the right little, tight little island.” Sir Walter Raleigh may have brought it over, and Captain John Smith may, in defiance of the legend, have won his life and Pocahontas’ hand by bluffing her old red father !

Baron Rothschild advised speculators : “Cut short your losses ; let your profits run.” Poker is so admirable an exposition of human nature that it is fruitful of maxims. Play liberally with liberal players, and closely with close players.

Cable says : “A man who can play delightfully on a guitar and keep a knife in his boot would make an excellent poker player ;” and it is just as well to remember that it is not at all necessary to talk : in making bets the simple pushing of the chips registers the bet. The father of American poker, General Bob Schenck, said : “The main elements of success are good luck, good cards, plenty of cheek and good temper.” Richard Guerndale, in his “Poker Book,” adds, and “plenty of patience.” To these it is not misplaced here to add this : Push your luck when winning ; stay out when losing, until a little better hand than the average comes to you.

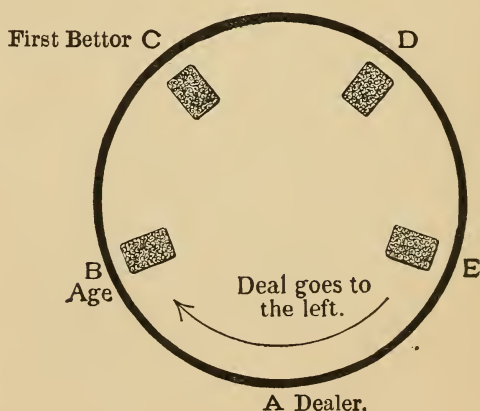
THE GAME.

"Yet I have faced it with a card of ten."

Taming of the Shrew. Act II., Scene 1st.

Poker is played with a pack of fifty-two cards and by any number of persons from two to seven, five being considered the most proper and agreeable. Each plays against all the others, and every card counts for its exact face value as in whist.

The five main operations of the game of poker are anteing, dealing, coming in or passing out, discarding, and drawing and betting.



The routine of the game may be readily gathered by a neophyte from the accompanying diagram, showing a table with positions for five players, A, B, C, D, and E.

Any one of the party may first shuffle the

cards, which he then proceeds to throw around, face up, one to each of the others and to himself. The first jack is the signal for deal, as a matter of convenience. The person before whom it falls gathers up all the cards.

Before dealing, this player, who for diagram uses may be designated A, must shuffle the cards in the sight of every one at the table. Any player may now demand to shuffle the pack, the dealer, A, shuffling last, as a matter of course.

The cards must now be cut. It is by no means essential that they be shuffled by any one but A. But cut they ought invariably to be, and the player upon whom this duty falls is always in E's seat, at the dealer's right.

The portion cut from the top must be placed at the bottom of the pack, and the dealer must hold the entire pack in his hands. The portion cut from the top must not be allowed to lie on the table while the cards are being dealt.

Dealing one card at a time, face down and to the left, A now proceeds to give to each player at the table five cards. Should a faced card appear in dealing, a new deal is required and the pack must be re-shuffled and re-cut as at first. The reason is evident: every player has a right to his chance of drawing any card in the pack. The sight of any card before the draw may alter the draw he would otherwise make.

THE STAKES.

"They have tied me to a stake."

Macbeth, Act V., Scene 7th.

The stakes are chips, or counters. As they are used, presumably, only for that particular game, or sitting, they should be redeemed by the banker, at its close, for cash. Any player may be banker, as agreed upon. An outsider, who sits at the table but holds no hand, may by agreement act in that capacity. Each player purchases from the banker as many chips as he desires. These purchases ought to be for cash. If the banker chooses to accept the purchaser's I. O. U. in return for the chips, it is to be presumed the I. O. U. will be redeemed for cash or chips at the close of the sitting. To any other player winning the chips of the player who gave the I. O. U. the banker must pay cash when "cashing-in" time comes. The I. O. U. must under no circumstances be allowed to get into circulation about the board. The amount of money received by the banker in return for chips should be carefully put aside for the redemption of the chips at the close of the game.

When it is agreed mutually to play for what are known as "table stakes," each player puts on the table the amount he is prepared to lose.

The smallest such amount is then the limit of the betting. Sometimes a knife or similar object is put, instead of cash, into the pot, with the remark, "That makes my stake as big as anybody's." But such irregularities are only permissible among intimates and are no part of the game. As to borrowing, it is the rule that if you borrow to raise, you must borrow to call. That is, if a player who is out of chips and cash succeeds in borrowing from the banker (no other borrowing should be permitted) enough to raise a pot on, he should not be permitted to cry poverty as an excuse for not calling when he in turn has been raised.

THE ANTE.

"If thou have power to raise him."

Henry IV., Part I. Act III., Scene 1st.

The stake put up before play is begun by the player next the dealer, on the left, is called the "blind." All the players who come in must put in the pot double the amount of the "blind" before cards can be drawn or bets made. The blind cannot exceed one half the limit, and should not be more than one tenth of the limit, in order to make the game generally satisfactory.

The player whose duty it is to put up the blind

is said to hold the ace, and is, from his position, entitled to the last bet.

The ante should be made small, as it is in no way a measure of the betting. The fact that a player has "anted" should not influence him to come in; he should not "make good" unless he would under other circumstances have drawn cards. The old style of poker required the dealer to put up a fixed sum to be played for before he dealt.

While the ante may be put in the pot at any time before the player holding the ace looks at his hand, it is proper for it to be made before the dealing is begun. As it is in a way the measure of betting, the ante as well as the limit should be definitely and unanimously decided before the deal begins.

It may not infrequently happen that a player who has had a run of luck desires to raise the limit and increase the ante. This procedure is much to be deprecated, as it is apt to be a sacrifice of the comfort of all for the caprice of one. Of course in that method of playing known as "table stakes," wherein any one player, on depositing in full view on the table the sum total of what he is willing to risk, has a right to "see" any hand for that sum, a raise of the ante or limit beyond the amount so deposited is impossible. And in the game of "freeze-out," a va-

riety of poker, any player losing the amount so deposited on the table is forbidden to come again into the game, the remaining players continuing the game until all the chips are in one player's possession.

While the ante and the limit are, as before said, generally arranged at a fixed value, an unlimited game is sometimes played. This, however, is gambling pure and simple, and at once places the player with a small capital at the mercy of his richer rivals. As this little treatise has been prepared for the use of those in search of harmless amusement, using stakes solely as a controlling influence to keep the play within bounds and hold the interest of the players to its spirit, I would suggest that the limit be never more than the equivalent of ten times the ante.

Having anted, B, the second player — that is, the one on the dealer's left — affords the third, C, the opportunity of "raising before the draw," or of "straddling" or doubling the ante (double the ante is of course four times the amount of the blind). In case of "raising before the draw," any player on the left of the age is allowed to raise the stake then being played for — by putting that much additional into the pot, to the limit, or to any less amount he chooses.

As such a raise has an inevitable tendency to keep other players from drawing cards, at such an additional expense, it is not wise to resort to it except in extreme cases, where the player so raising has a good hand, which he believes the others are specially willing to "buck" against for bluffing purposes.

As the third player, C, must in any event bet first unless he passes, it would seem that he ought to be very particular in straddling. Ordinarily he should not come in, that is, offer to bet, with less than a pair of tens in his hand. He must therefore consider, when he proposes straddling, that the chances are that he has not enough in his hand to warrant coming in. A straddle under the circumstances—as he cannot see his cards until after the straddle—implies confidence that he has that much or more, or amounts to a bluff pure and simple. Generally speaking, good players do not straddle. For straddling does not in reality alter the chances of winning: it simply gives the straddler the opportunity of observing what the other players draw, with a view of forming the poker-player's legitimate inferences as to the value of their hands to begin with.

If the player next the age, on the left, does not straddle, no one else can, and he must use

his privilege before the completion of the deal. No one, of course, should look at his cards before the deal is completed all around.

Should the third player, who sits next the age, straddle the "blind," as the ante is now called, the players next him may in turn straddle his "blind," or raise, so long as the "blind" is not in this way made more than half the limit of the betting.

Some players, in case of a "straddle," allow the player making the "straddle" the privilege of drawing cards last. But this is not right, and should not be permitted.

When in the pot, the right of the age to bet last and the right of the dealer to draw cards last should never, under any circumstances, be interfered with.

THE HANDS.

"The very age and body of the time."

Hamlet. Act III., Scene 2d.

Each hand must always contain five cards.
The hands at poker may be numbered as follows :

1. It contains no pair, straight, or sequence, and is not worth drawing to for any reason; sometimes called a "kilter."

2. It contains an ace and may be worth drawing to for that reason.

3. It contains a "bobtail" flush or straight, i. e., four cards of the same suit or a four sequence of different suits.

— 4. It contains one pair.

5. It contains two pairs.

6. It contains three of a kind.

7. It contains a straight.

8. It contains a flush.

9. It contains a full.

10. It contains fours.

11. It contains a straight flush.

PLAYING A HAND PAT.

"Now might I do it, pat."

Hamlet. Act III., Scene 3d.

To play a hand pat the limit should be bet both before and after the draw, and the game will seldom be found to be worth the candle. The only hand to stand pat on, other than a genuine one, is a hand without a pair and nothing to draw to.

In the Southern States, I have heard, many players consider it almost a point of honor to stand pat on a hand called a "kilter"—that is, a hand with a nine for the highest and a two for the lowest card, and no chance of making a

sequence. It is impossible to make anything of such a hand by drawing, and the only thing to be done is to discard the whole or play pat. This hand is No. 1 in the subdivision I have attempted to make to simplify matters.

We will now suppose A, B, C, D, and E have discarded and drawn, and so completed their hands. Before proceeding to the serious business of betting or bluffing, let us glance at hands in general, so as to form an idea of what A, B, C, D, and E may be expected to have.

Sequences, flushes, and fulls are the complete, we might say perfect, hands. All the others could be better.

In the enumeration of eleven poker hands which I venture to make, I make no mention of "skips," "round the corners," "tigers," and "blazes." *They have no place in the regular game, and should be tabooed.*

To the novice I would say by way of explanation that a "blaze," when played, consists of five face or picture cards and beats two pairs. A "skip" is a species of straight, in which the cards do not run consecutively, but with the interval of one between each, thus: Two, four, six, eight, and ten, or five, seven, nine, jack, and king. This hand, when played, beats two pairs.

A "round-the-corner" straight is king, ace,

two, three, and four, or jack, queen, king, ace, and two. When played, the hand ranks as a straight, but any straight will beat it.

The "tiger" consists of the lowest possible combination of five cards : two, three, four, five, and seven. Its place is between a straight and a flush.

The value of any hand is only relative, since its apparent value is destroyed by the delightful element of uncertainty as to the actual value of any other player's hand. It has been said, however, that if you go in on a pair of face cards only, in the long run you will come out better than those players who go in on smaller pairs. This would be too cautious a game, however, to be popular at a social table.



HAND NO. 1.

This, the lowest of all hands, contains in the example given a ten-spot of clubs, nine-spot of hearts, four-spot of spades, five-spot of diamonds,

and six-spot of clubs. No player should draw to it, and it is useless except to discard *in toto* for five new cards, or to stand pat on for a bluff.



HAND NO. 2.

This hand contains no pairs, no straight sequence or flush. In the example given it contains an ace and a face card. It was about a hand like this that the story of Henry Clay's famous game with Daniel Webster is told.

It was Webster's deal. Clay took one card and Webster stood pat. They went on betting until they had each \$2000 on the board, when Clay called. Webster laughed, shrugged his shoulders, and threw his hand on the pot, saying, "I've only a pair of deuces." "Then the pot is yours," Clay said, also laughing, "I have only ace high." Each felt sure that the other was bluffing, and both were right. But it was contrary to the probabilities, even when only two were playing, as well as to good play in general,

for Clay to call on ace high, however proper it may have seemed to him to raise on that hand.

It is often proper to discard four cards from this hand and draw to the ace. The draw to the ace and king is folly.



HAND NO. 3.

The “bobtail,” or, as I have called it, Hand No. 3, contains, as here illustrated, a “bobtail” or “four flush” of hearts. The hand is the same, of course, in any suit. It is nearly, if not quite, always advisable to draw one card to this hand. When holding the ace a good player always draws one to a bobtail. The value of bobtail straights and flushes increases directly with the number of players at the table.

HAND NO. 4.

The “one-pair” hand, which I have called Hand No. 4, is shown here with a pair of tens,

those of clubs and hearts, the four of spades, five of hearts, and six of hearts.



A pair, of course, consists of two cards of the same denomination, and the hand must contain three other cards. If two players each hold a pair, the highest pair wins. If the two pairs are similar, the highest remaining card wins. The usual discard is, naturally, three cards.



HAND NO. 5.

This hand contains two pairs and one odd card. The value of the hand is determined by the high-

est pair. Thus, a pair of kings and a pair of fives beat a pair of queens and a pair of tens. In case the two hands are similar, the one containing the highest odd card wins. The usual discard is one card. (See "Draws.")

In the example given there are a pair of jacks, diamonds and spades, and a pair of threes, of clubs and hearts; the odd card being the nine of hearts.



HAND NO. 6.

Hand No. 6, called "threes" as a rule, consists of three cards of the same denomination and of course of different suits, accompanied by two odd cards of different denominations and of the same or different suits.

In the illustration there are three tens, of spades, clubs, and hearts, a king of diamonds, and an ace of spades.

The ordinary discard is two cards. But of this more later under the head of "Draws."

HAND NO. 7.

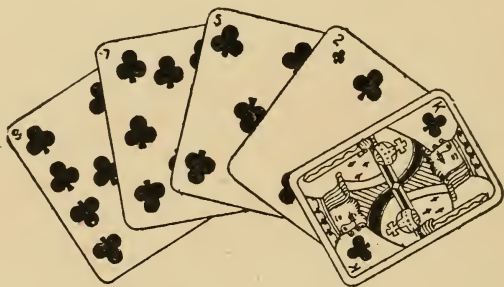
A straight, which we call Hand No. 7, is a sequence of five cards, not all of the same suit. Thus, a five, six, seven, eight, and nine of any color or suit make a straight. An ace in this hand may be either the lowest or the highest card,



but cannot occupy an intermediate position ; as, for example, queen, king, ace, two, and three do not constitute a straight proper, but are by some considered to be a hand by themselves, called a "round the corner," which, however, is to be deprecated.

The value of a straight is to be determined by the *top* card. The highest straight wins. A straight will beat triplets. Straights are not always played, but should be allowed ; though this of course should be settled before the beginning of the game, as, indeed, should all points likely to be mooted.

The illustration shows a straight of spades and hearts. The hand would still be the same whatever suit the cards were.



HAND NO. 8.

The flush contains five cards of the same suit, not in sequence, as five hearts, or five clubs, of any denomination. The flush containing the highest card wins. If the highest cards tie, then the next highest card in either hand decides which wins. A flush will beat a straight, and two equal flushes divide a pot, of course. In counting for supremacy the ace is high in a flush or straight.

The flush shown here consists of five clubs.

The flush of course, as does the straight, requires its holder to stand pat. While this greatly impairs the efficiency of the hand, it proves tremendously valuable at times. The straight flush, consisting of five cards, consecutive and

of the same suit, is the highest hand at poker, *if straights are allowed in the game. If not, it counts, like any other flush, simply from the highest card.*



HAND NO. 9.

The full hand consists of three cards of the same denomination and a pair, as three kings and a pair of eights. If more than one player holds a full, the highest threes win, irrespective of the other pair. A full will beat a flush.

The full shown here consists of three jacks of the club, heart, and diamond suits, and a pair of sevens of the diamond and heart suits.

HAND NO. 10.

Fours, here called Hand No. 10, consists of four cards of the same denomination, accompanied by one other card. The highest four



wins. When straights are *not* played, fours beat a straight flush, being of course higher in value than any flush.



HAND NO. II.

The straight flush is the highest hand that can be held. It is a straight in which *all the cards are of the same suit*. The value is determined in the same way as a straight, the highest card winning. When straights are not played the straight flush does not rank higher than a common flush.

It is possible for two straight flushes to be equal, and in that case the pot is divided.

The straight flush here shown is of diamonds, beginning with the king.

THE DRAW.

"I dare draw as soon as another man."

Romeo and Juliet. Act II., Scene 4th.

There is a slangy saying that the game of poker is "all in the draw." While this is an exaggeration, it is not so very far from the truth. In the first place, it should be borne in mind that it is a duty each player owes to the game, his neighbors, and himself, to discard and draw quickly and decorously. It should be concluded as soon as possible after every one has come in or passed out. The practice of poring over the cards should be deprecated; it often prevents some other player from acting on an impulse suggested by the first view of his own hand, and by delaying further procedure annoys the other players in general.

As to the method of discarding, one should throw his discards to the center of the table, as nearly as possible in front of the next dealer. This discarding should be done quickly and unhesitatingly. The dealer must announce his draw in an audible voice; the other players of

course must ask for their cards so as to be heard by the dealer and other players as well. After cards have been drawn and before a bet is made, should a player ask the dealer how many cards any other player drew, the latest decision is that the dealer is bound to answer.

Two cards should not be drawn to a pair unless an ace or king can be retained with them, except for the purpose of a "bluff." If most of the other players are "in," the chances of drawing an ace or a king are not quite so good as those of drawing a small card, because the other players are more likely to be staying in on high than on low cards. The probabilities of such being the case are of course quite impossible to determine, but they are very slight and are more than compensated by the chances of increasing the comparative value of the hand by making aces or kings "up" instead of two small pairs. Thus, while it has been well said that the actual mathematical expectations of improving such a hand are greater by drawing three cards, yet it cannot be denied that the practical value of the hand is much enhanced by a successful two-card draw. The odd card should only be retained with a small pair—that is, on the merits of which the pot cannot, presumably, be won—say a pair of nines or under.

THE DRAW TO TWO PAIRS.

" . . . and here justified

By us, a pair of kings."

Winter's Tale. Act V., Scene 3d.

The only way of improving two pairs being to make a full hand, the chances are eleven and three fourths to one against its being made. When two small pairs are held and there are indications of fairly good hands being out, the smaller pair is often discarded, the chances of drawing a third to a pair being greater than of making a full hand out of two pairs. Again, if two pairs be held with aces or kings up, and a raise following a two-card draw by one or the other players points to threes being held by him, the smaller pair might be discarded in the hope of making high threes. No rules can be laid down for either of the above cases, as a question of judgment is involved. Many players of experience recommend standing pat occasionally on two small pairs. This is not specially to be advised, since the only hand liable to be driven out is a hand which is *just a little* better. Almost any player with "aces up" or three of a kind will call a pat hand, particularly if the pot be a large one; and to stand pat on two pairs against an inferior hand is to waste your resources.

THE DRAW TO THREES.

*"Hold your hands,
Both you of my inclining, and the rest."
Othello. Act I., Scene 2d.*

When a player finds threes in his hand on the first deal, he at once recognizes the fact that it may be improved to either a full hand or fours. There is no other increase of value possible. Once in every twenty-three and a half times ^{four} of a kind may be made by drawing two cards to threes. Just twice as often, or about once in twelve times, a full hand may be made. It is possible, therefore, to improve this hand by drawing just once in every eight times.

A favorite play is to retain an odd card, discarding and drawing one card, and thus accomplishing the valuable result of deceiving one's rivals as to the strength of the hand. The probabilities of improving the hand are of course much less, ^{four} of a kind being possibly made in this way only once in ^{forty-seven} times. The one-card draw will result in a full hand about once in sixteen times. The one-card draw creates the impression that the hand is either a straight, a flush, or two pairs. It seems to be the opinion of good judges that as three of a kind is nineteen times out of twenty a good enough hand to win the pot, it offers the pos-

.....
sessor a very wide range for the exercise of his own judgment in the draw. It matters not how the draw is made, the hand is bound to remain good, and may be improved. For this reason the policy of masking the hand is often advisable ; for the one-card draw especially is calculated to create an appearance of bluffing, indicating a draw to a bobtail straight or flush.

Some excellent authorities on poker say that with three of a kind it is almost always best to hold up a card and draw one.

THE DRAW TO A FULL.

" 'Tis a good hand."

Othello. Act III., Scene 4th.

While it seems a little paradoxical to talk about drawing cards to a hand which is dealt you in its complete form, such as a full, yet it often occurs that for reasons of the moment it is advisable to discard the pair and draw two cards, or more probably to throw away one of the associate pair and draw one. Where there are only a few playing and a full hand with aces or kings pat is dealt, it is better to mask the strength of the hand by throwing away the small pair, or one of them at least, retaining the three aces or three kings. But this, of course, is largely a matter for individual taste and the emergency of the moment.

DRAWING TO A BOBTAIL.

"For I am nothing."

Othello. Act II., Scene 1st.

The larger the number of players in a game, the better play it is to draw one card to a bobtail flush or straight. As far as the element of chance goes, it must be remembered that the four cards are of absolutely no value without the odd fifth which is to be drawn, except so far as bluffing is concerned. There is no probability of a bobtail winning on its merits, consequently the only chance of winning is of improving the hand. It is hardly worth while to take the risk unless the pot is one of considerable size.

Drawing to a straight with both ends open is very good play, as the odds are only about six to one against its being made. But drawing to an intermediate straight is taking a chance of one in twelve. A flush, according to the calculus of probabilities, should on a one-card draw be made nine times out of forty-seven.

THE BETTING AND BLUFFING.

"I rais'd him."

Coriolanus. Act V., Scene 5th.

After the discarding comes the betting. Primarily the bettor, or the player on whom the duty

of betting or "passing out" first devolves, is the second to the dealer's left, C. He bets first or goes out, and each player, after him, has the privilege of either "seeing" what C has bet, raising it, or passing out. When in this way the turn of the age is reached, he may raise, up to the limit, or simply "see" the highest bet already made, or, if C's bet is the highest, he has the advantage of position and may "call," his "call" requiring a "show-down" of hands.

That form of betting known as bluffing, which by some is erroneously supposed to so characterize the game of draw poker as to give it, actually, the name of "bluff" in some localities, is a necessary part of the game as best played. But it cannot be denied that many poker players do get through an evening without once resorting to it. The fact that they pretend to bluff, or bluff at bluffing, has, however, the desired result, in producing an erroneous impression on the minds of their companions at table—producing such impressions being indeed a *sine qua non* to success; for the player known never to bluff is never "called," except on some hand shown by experience to be probably superior to his. Successful bluffs are almost impossible in jack-pots, which see later.

When the last bet or bluff has been made, and there is a "call," the hands of all those who are

still in the game should be shown face upward on the table. The highest hand takes the pot. Where two hands are exactly of equal value, the pot is divided between them.

JACK-POTS.

“Silken, sly, insinuating Jacks.”

Richard III. Act I., Scene 3d.

The jack-pot is a delightful episode in a game of poker ; but it must be permitted to arise naturally, and to dawn upon the vision of the wearied traveler like an oasis in the desert, rather than be forced upon him. “Passing the buck,” which is simply the phrase applied to the circulation of a buckhorn knife, or any other such object, around the table, should never be employed as a means of artificially producing jack-pots, since the jack-pot is a direct and serious innovation on the regular routine of the game, making a difference not only in the dealing, but in the drawing and betting also.

A jack-pot is a pot played for when every player around the table passes.

This requires the supposition that when all have passed around to the ante-man, he also passes. Thereupon, it being his deal, he takes the cards and deals as usual ; but before so doing, every player around the board, as one of the solemn ceremonials attending upon jack-pots, is

required to contribute to the pot before the deal the amount of the ante, or some other amount arbitrarily fixed upon by the ante-man, who exercises very considerable authority in the matter.

The second distinguishing feature of the jack-pot is the fact that, after the ante-man has so dealt, and all around the table have so contributed, the first bettor is called upon not only to bet but to perform that mysterious ceremony known as "opening the pot," which he cannot do unless he finds in his hand the equivalent of a pair of jacks or better. If he finds that he has not in his hand a pair of jacks or better, he passes, and the next player in turn examines his hand for the openers. If he does not find them, the privilege of opening the pot passes around the board, and if nobody can do so, the next player in turn deals again after every player present has "fattened" the pot with either one chip or an amount agreed upon. The process of opening the pot must now be gone through with again, and if the second time no player in his turn discovers a pair of jacks or better, the pot must be again "fattened," and a new deal made until the mystical openers are finally discovered.

When this discovery has been made, and the player finding in his hand a pair of jacks or more says, "I will open the pot," he is at once

called upon to bet, no matter what his position at the table be, and all those who do not see his bet fall out, and lose their share of the pot.

It is considered the best play to open a jack-pot for the limit if it is of any special value. If, however, the opener has an extraordinary good hand and wishes to induce everybody else to come in, he may make the open as light as he chooses. If, however, he finds in his hand openers only, it is generally considered best for him to open for the limit.

The drawing and betting in jack-pots, outside of the opening bet, are exactly similar to those of the regular game of poker.

Any player other than the opener who desires to come in may do so on putting up the amount for which the pot was opened, regardless of the value of his hand.

Of course as the opener must have a pair of jacks or more, he must prove to the other players at the end of the pot that he did hold such a hand on the go-in. For that reason he must invariably show his hand at the termination of the pot, openers and all, face up on the table. It is considered an excellent rule, by the way, to open a jack-pot whenever you can.

The question of discards naturally arises when the opener has such a hand as this : A pair of jacks and four hearts. Naturally it occurs to

him, with a big pot and a good many playing, that were he to discard the other jack and keep the four hearts, with the jack at the head, he may stand a good chance of drawing the fifth heart and getting a flush. In such cases it is considered allowable for him to do so, if he carefully puts the discarded jack on one side, where it remains in full view, and announces his intention of discarding one of his openers.

PENALTIES IN POKER.

"Your lordship is the most patient man in loss."

Cymbeline. Act II., Scene 3d.

In a gentleman's game, by gentlemen and for gentlemen, there ought to be as little possible question on such matters as penalties. However, there are some sins against the code of poker so grievous that their commission should be discouraged in every possible way; and against them penalties have been at times made. This, however, should be largely a matter for mutual agreement at the time.

The penalty for opening a jack-pot without openers is sometimes enforced by requiring the offender to make an extra contribution to the pot. The penalty for taking up a six-card or other foul hand from the table is that the offender must not play in that hand. If a foul

hand is bet, the offender loses the pot. If a player miscalls his hands, innocently, and on the show-down has enough to win the pot, it remains his. Miscalling a hand, however, knowingly, with the expectation that the error may escape detection in the show-down, is one of the grossest violations of fair play. Any hand which is not properly dealt is a foul hand.

STRAIGHT POKER.

Straight Poker was played before Draw Poker, and is the original game. It carries out the true spirit of the game, and is almost pure bluff. The essential difference between Straight Poker and Draw Poker is that in the former you play with the original cards, there being no *draw*. Each player puts up a certain amount before the deal, and there is no ante.

STUD POKER.

Stud Poker is played in negro clubs and in the West. The deal is of no value; one position is as good as another. Each player puts up a certain amount, to form a pot. The dealer throws down two cards to each player, the first face down, the second face up. The first is called the "down" card, and is seen by the recipient only. The player with the highest "turn-up" card can make a bet or pass and come in

again. If he passes, the player next him can bet, or pass ; and so on, around the table. When a bet is made and the other players have either seen or passed out, or when all have passed, another card is dealt around, face up, the player with the highest shown hand having to bet, or pass, first, and so on, until each player has received five cards, four face up and one face down. The betting and raising are as in regular poker, the highest hand winning at the call. If the game be played with a draw, then cards are drawn which are not exposed.

WHISKY POKER.

In Whisky Poker each player puts up a certain amount ; this forms a pot, which is not increased, there being no betting. Five cards are dealt around, with an extra hand in the middle of the table ; this hand is called "the widow." The player next the dealer has the choice of retaining his hand or taking "the widow." If he retains his hand he passes, and the player to the left has the privilege, and so on all around. If "the widow" be taken, the player taking it places his original hand in the middle of the table, face up, and the other players in turn take one or more cards from the exposed hand, replacing them with cards from their own. This goes on until one player de-

declares himself satisfied ; those after him may continue to exchange cards until it comes round to him again, when the hands are considered called and the highest wins. Any player may consider himself satisfied at any time, and so indicates by rapping on the table with his knuckles.

The game originated in the mining-camps, no money or chips being used, but the lowest hand being obliged to pay for drinks.

POKER SHARPS.

MARKED CARDS, "BUGS," AND OTHER DEVICES FOR THE UNWARY.

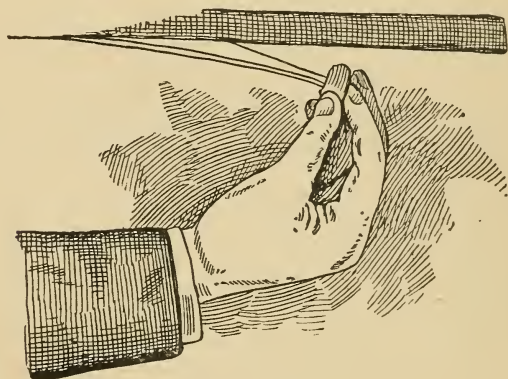
*"But whiles he thought to steal the single ten,
The king was slyly finger'd from the deck!"*

Henry VI., Part III. Act V., Scene 1st.

As it is just as well to be on one's guard against the devices of swindlers and the mechanical contrivances of fraudulent poker players, I will give the reader an idea of the "bug," marked cards, and other traps for the unwary. Of the devices regularly manufactured and sold for the aid and comfort of professional poker players, a conspicuous one is the "hold-out," which enables the gambler to hold out from three to fifty-two cards, so that he may supply his hand from this extra source without danger of detection. There are vest "hold-outs," coat "hold-outs," the "bug" or table "hold-out," and the ring "hold-out."

The "bug," an illustration of which is printed herewith, is about as simple a contrivance as can

well be imagined. It is made in various styles, but consists usually of a small wooden nob about the size of a chestnut. Into this is inserted a piece of watch-spring four or five inches long, with a decided upward tendency. When the head of a small steel nail with a very sharp point has also been inserted in the nob, the "bug" is ready for business. In the illustration a man's



The "Bug."

hand is just about placing it underneath the table. The sharp point is stuck into the table a few inches from the edge, and when firmly fixed the watch-spring with the upward tendency makes connection with the flat under surface, and a convenient place for placing extra cards is thus secured. In a game of poker a few extra kings, queens, and aces are, of course, always desirable. There are also various kinds of reflectors or mirrors to be used so that the dealer

may learn what cards he is dealing to an opponent. "A table reflector to fit any table, very fine, cannot be detected, a valuable article for a dealer at stud poker," is highly prized. So is a reflector in a pipe, all complete, with pipe ready for use. There is also a reflector to fasten on a pile of greenbacks, and "a reflector to set in five faro or poker chips, set in chips ready for use."

Nearly everybody has heard of playing cards with marked backs, but comparatively few have heard of quite as common a device among gamblers known as stripping. Cards that are stripped are simply cut a very little narrower and shorter than the other cards in the pack, and in consequence, the cards which are not stripped are very easily detected by the delicate hand of the experienced gambler, and are put readily in desired positions.

MARKED CARDS.

"Master Sure-Card, as I think."

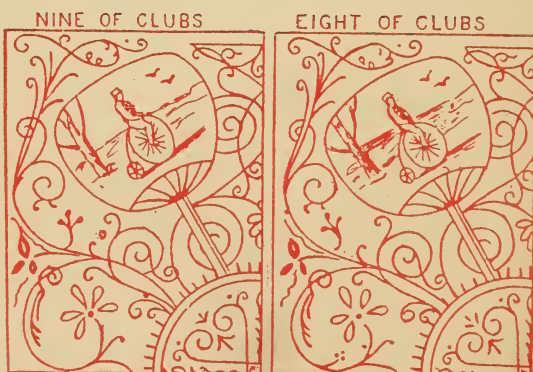
Henry IV. Part II. Act III., Scene 2d.

The accompanying pictures of sections of cards with marked backs show clearly one of the many ingenious devices. There are two flowers on the lower left-hand corner, which are varied to designate the suit and the size of the card. The lower flower has three leaves. When the

upper leaf is the largest of the three, the card is a club ; when the center leaf is the largest, it is



a diamond ; when the lower leaf is the largest, it is a heart ; and when all the leaves are of the same size, the card is a spade.

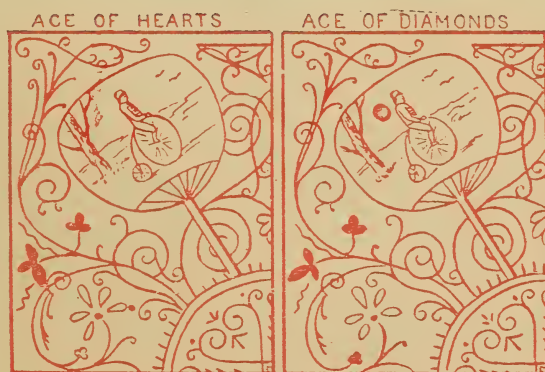


The size of the cards is determined by the upper flower, first by its design and secondly by the direction in which it points. If it is of a

smooth clover design, it designates one of five cards, beginning with the ace and ending with



the ten-spot, accordingly as it points upward, at an acute angle, at right angles, at an acute angle downward, or straight down. If it is rather



quaint and angular in design, it designates one of five cards, beginning with the nine and ending with the five. These two flowers are illus-

trated in the accompanying cuts, showing the ace and king, the nine-spot and eight.

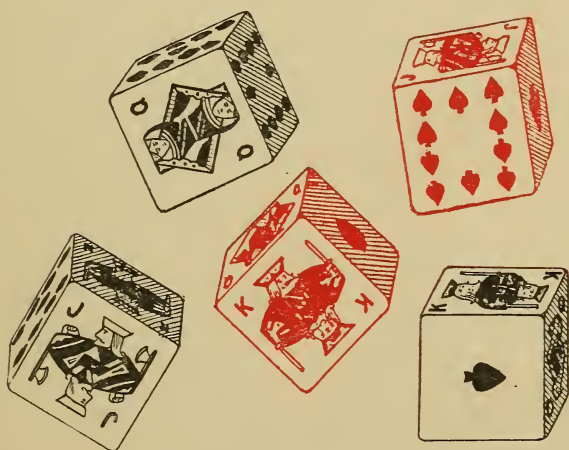
The four-spot, the tray, and the deuce are designated by a two-leafed flower shown in three different directions. The flowers which are emphasized in the cuts and marked in black are, of course, on the back of the card itself lost in the general design, and can only be distinguished by a practiced eye.

POKER-DICE.

"I will stand the hazard of the die."

Richard III. Act V., Scene 4th.

FIVE dice must be used in this interesting variety of the game, and the stakes determined on must be put into the pot by each player, one, two, three, or as many chips as may be mutually



agreed upon. The whole amount or pot goes to the best thrower. Any number of players may engage in poker-dice, each one to have three

throws. When the game was first invented, two throws only were allowed the player, but the three-throw game is much the more interesting.

The entire five dice are cast at the first throw. Suppose the first thrower, there being no advantage in priority, throws this hand :

Two aces, a deuce, a tray, and a four.

Now his game would be, of course, to leave his aces on the table and throw the other three dice, since it would be absurd for him to split his aces. Should he at the second throw turn out another ace, he has now three of a kind, and possibly at this throw he might turn out another pair with his ace, making an ace full ; or he might throw two more aces, making four of a kind ; or three aces more, making five aces, the highest hand in poker-dice. It is possible with five dice to make a straight, say one, two, three, four, and five, thus beating three of a kind. In short, the values run exactly as in the card game of poker. When two players with one pair each are tied, the next highest pip counts in favor of the pair with which it is associated. For example, if a player has a pair of aces and a three, four, and five, and the other player has a pair of aces and a two, three, and a six, the six makes his hand the best and he takes the pot.

On the occasion of an even tie, a single throw between the two decides the winner.

A player is not bound to throw three times. It is his privilege to stand on any single throw, whether it be the first, second, or third. A new and very pretty kind of poker-dice has recently been manufactured, showing the nine, ten, jack, king, queen, and ace, beautifully enameled. They may be procured at any of the leading houses where sporting goods are sold.

SCHENCK ON POKER.

WHILE General Robert E. Schenck was the American Minister to England, he won the very unjust title of "Poker Schenck." I am told that at one of the Queen's receptions he fell into conversation with a noted English duchess about cards. During this talk he described to her the beauties of poker in such a way that she became intensely interested, and begged him to write her out a set of rules and directions for playing the great American game. This Mr. Schenck very kindly did. The duchess learned to play poker, and as it wove its fascinating toils about her she wanted her friends to learn also. For convenience she had Mr. Schenck's letter printed in a neat pamphlet and distributed among her friends of the court circles. A malicious scribbler heard of the fact, and telegraphed to the American newspapers that our foreign minister had published a book on poker playing. As many persons feel a natural interest in General Schenck's rules, I append them herewith.

RULES FOR PLAYING POKER.

BY THE HON. ROBERT C. SCHENCK.

Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States of America near Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland.

THE DEAL.

The deal is of no special value, and anybody may begin.

The dealer, beginning with the person at his left, throws around five cards to each player, giving one card at a time.

The dealer shuffles and makes up the pack himself ; or, it may be done by the player at his left, and the player at his right must cut.

THE ANTE.

To begin the pool, the player next to the dealer on his left must put up money, which is called an "ante" ; and then in succession each player, passing around to the left, must, after looking at his hand, determine if he goes in or not ; and each person deciding to play for the pool must put in twice the amount of the ante. Those who decline to play throw up their cards face downward on the table, and, per consequence, in front of the next dealer.

When all who wish to play have gone in, the person putting up the ante can either give up all interest in the pool, thus forfeiting the ante that has been put up, or else can play like the others who have gone in, by "making good"; that is, putting up in addition to the ante as much more as will make him equal in stake to the rest.

If a number of players have gone in, it is best generally for the ante-man to make good and go in, even with a poor hand, because half his stake is already up, and he can therefore stay in for half as much as the others have had to put up, which is a percentage in favor of his taking the risk. This, of course, does not apply if any one has "raised"; that is, more than doubled the ante before it comes around to the starting-point.

RAISING.

Any one, at the time of going in, must put up as much as double the ante, and may put up as much more as he pleases, by way of "raising" the ante; in which case every other player must put up as much as will make his stake equal to such increase, or else abandon what he has already put in.

Each player, as he makes good and equals the others who are in before him, can thus increase the ante if he chooses, compelling the others

still to come up to that increase, or to abandon their share in the pool.

All "going in," or "raising" of the pool, as well as all betting afterward, must be in regular order, going around by the left ; no one going in, making good, increasing the ante, or betting, except in turn.

THE DRAW.

When all are in equally who intend to play, each player in turn will have the privilege of drawing ; that is, of throwing away any number of his five cards and drawing as many others, to try thus to better his hand. The cards thus thrown up must be placed face downward on the table, and, for convenience, in front of or near the next dealer.

The dealer, passing around to the left, will ask each player in turn how many cards he will have, and deal him the number asked for from the top of the pack, without their being seen. The dealer, if he has gone in to play for the pool, will in like manner help himself last.

The players must throw away their discarded cards before taking up or looking at those they draw.

In the game every player is for himself and against all others, and to that end will not let any of his cards be seen, nor betray the value of

his hand by drawing or playing out of his turn, or by change of countenance or any other sign. It is a great object to mystify your adversaries up to the "call," when hands have to be shown. To this end it is permitted to chaff or talk nonsense, with a view of misleading your adversaries as to the value of your hand; but this must be without unreasonably delaying the game.

BETTING.

When the drawing is all complete, the betting goes around in order, like the drawing, to the left. The ante-man is the first to bet, unless he has declined to play; and in that case the first to bet is the player nearest the dealer, on his left. But the player entitled to bet first may withhold his bet until the others have bet around to him, which is called "holding the age;" and this, being an advantage, should, as a general rule, be practiced.

Each bettor in turn must put into the pool a sum equal at least to the first bet made; but each may in turn increase the bet, or raise it, as it comes to him: in which case the bets, proceeding around in order, must be made by each player in his turn equal to the highest amount put in by any one; or else, failing to do that, the party who fails must go out of the play, forfeiting his interest in the pool.

When a player puts in only as much as has been put in by each player who has preceded him, that is called "seeing" the bet.

When a player puts in that much, and raises it, that is called seeing the bet and "going better."

When the bet goes around to the last bettor or player who remains in, if he does not wish to see and go better, he simply sees and "calls"; and then all players must show their hands, and the highest hand wins the pool.

When any one declines to see the bet or the increase of bet which has been made, he "lays down" his hand—that is, throws it up with the cards face downward on the table. If all the other players throw down their hands, the one who remains in to the last wins, and takes the pool without showing his hand.

To "bluff" is to take the risk of betting high enough on a poor hand, or a worthless one, to make all the other players lay down their hands without seeing or calling you.

When a hand is complete, so that the holder of it can play without drawing to better it, that is called a "pat" hand. A bold player will sometimes decline to draw any cards, and pretend to have a pat hand, and play it as such, when he has none.

A skillful player will watch and observe what

each player draws, the expression of the face, the circumstances and manner of betting, and judge, or try to judge, of the value of each hand opposed to him accordingly.

No one is bound to answer the question how many cards he drew, except the dealer ; and the dealer is not bound to tell after the betting has begun.

DRAWING.

If the player determines to draw to a pair, he draws three cards. If he draws to two pairs, he draws one card.

If he holds three to begin with, he draws two cards, in order to have the best chance of making a full, inasmuch as, in playing, pairs are apt to run together ; but to deceive his adversaries, and make them think he has nothing better than two pairs, a sharp player will often draw but one card to his three.

It is advisable, sometimes, to keep an ace, or other high card, as an "outsider," with a small pair, and draw two cards,—thus taking the chances of matching the high card, and so getting a good two pairs, or something better possibly, while at the same time others may be deceived into believing that the player is drawing to threes.

When drawing to cards of the same suit to try to make a flush, or to cards of successive

That full counts highest of which the three cards of the same denomination are highest. The two cards of the same denomination help only to constitute the full, but do not add to the value of the hand.

When hands are equal so far that each party holds a pair or two pairs of exactly the same value, then the next highest card or cards in each hand must be compared with the next highest card or cards in the other hand to determine which wins.

In case of the highest hands (which very seldom occurs) being exactly equal, the pool is divided.

The main elements of success in the game are : (1) *good luck* ; (2) *good cards* ; (3) *plenty of cheek* ; and (4) *good temper*.

LAWS OF POKER.

"It is the law."

Measure for Measure. Act III., Scene 2d.

Though the above rules are good, they require amplification, and to meet a new generation of players the following laws, which are the latest, I now summarize as follows :

DEALING.

1. One card is thrown face up to each player. The lowest card deals. The ace is the lowest. The king is the highest.

2. Cards are shuffled in sight. Every player has a right to shuffle. The dealer shuffles last.
3. The player to the right of the dealer cuts.
4. One card at a time is given to each player, beginning at the left.
5. The deal goes to the left.
6. A pack with a faced card, when dealt, requires a new deal by the same dealer. Cards are re-shuffled and cut as before.
7. When a card is faced in dealing, this turning of the card being due to the dealer, or any other player, whether by accident or not, the player must receive the card.
8. If two cards are exposed in the same way, as described in Rule 7, there must be a new deal.
9. If a player *raises* his hand and discovers he has the wrong number of cards, it is not a misdeal. He must discover it before raising the hand from the table or forfeit his hand.
10. No play can be made without the exact number of cards, which is five.

DISCARDING.

11. After the first five cards are dealt, players who remain in may discard up to five cards, and ask for as many new cards as they require. The discard begins at the age—the player at the left of the dealer. Every player must discard in his regular turn. The exact number of cards

asked for is given. Once cards are thrown away they cannot be handled until the next deal.

12. Players cannot ask others what is the discard as to numbers, either before or after the draw. (Formerly the rule read that before the draw the question could be asked, but not after it.) The dealer must announce his own discard.

13. When more cards are offered by the dealer than are asked for by the discard, the player, on announcing that too many or not enough cards are dealt him, can decline taking them, and the dealer may correct the error. If, however, the player accepts the cards from the dealer, and looks at them, whether they be more or less than the regular number he should have, which is five, the player is ruled out of the game.

14. If, in asking for cards in the draw, one card is turned or shown, the latest-accepted rule is that this card cannot be taken. The dealer takes the exposed card, puts it at the bottom of the pack, proceeds to give the cards in order to the next players, and when through then gives a card to the player whose card has been turned. If more than one card be turned in the draw, the rule is the same. (This rule, though often disputed, should be accepted.)

THE ANTE.

15. The player after the dealer must ante first, before the deal. He puts up any number of

chips, not exceeding half the limit. To come in he has to double the ante, as the other players have to. The ante can never be more, when first put up, than half the limit.

16. When the cards are dealt, players who come in must double the ante.

17. The age comes in last, and makes his ante good or not, at his option.

RAISES.

18. After the age any player, in his turn, may raise. Any number of raises in turn are in order.

19. After the draw, any player who is in, commencing with the one to the left of the age, can raise.

20. The eldest hand, the age, comes in last. If the age declines making his blind good, notwithstanding this, the first player after him must bet first. *The age never passes.*

21. If a bet be raised by a player who is in his regular turn, the next player must see the bet or retire.

SHOWING HANDS.

22. A show of hands, putting them on the table, face up, is a rule never to be departed from when the call is made.

CALLING.

23. When a player bets more than any one

else, within the limit, and no one calls or sees him, he wins.

ONCE OUT.

24. Once out of the game, a player can never enter again. (*No foul hand can win under any circumstances, except in a successful bluff.*)

THE BLIND AND STRADDLE.

25. The age alone can make the blind. The next to the age can straddle. But the third player after the age cannot begin to straddle. The third player can straddle the straddler, always within the limit.

26. The straddle cannot make the straddle and raise at the same time. (There is no rule less observed than the one *that the age never passes*. This rule, No. 20, should be faithfully observed.)

RULES FOR THE JACK-POT.

27. Each player puts up as many chips as the one having the age.

28. The opening hand must have a pair of jacks or better.

29. If no player can come in, another chip is added by each player, and a second round begins.

30. After the opener, to the left of him all the players can come in, providing they see the amount he bets.

31. The opening bet must be put up before the draw.

32. The opener makes the first bet.

33. The last person to bet is the player, who is to the right of the opener.

34. All raises, as in poker, are in regular order.

35. For an error in opening a jack-pot, the person having made the mistake retires from the game. The penalty for the mistake is for him to put up a jack-pot equal in chips to the one he has entered into in error.

36. In the case of an error of this kind, any other player, to the left of the putative opener, having a pair of jacks or better can open.

37. If the error is found out after the cards have been drawn, and no hand has a pair of openers, that round of jack-pots is null and void.

38. A jack-pot cannot be opened by a player drawing for a straight or a flush. Any other player but the opener can draw for what he pleases. (See the explanations for this apparently arbitrary rule.)

(The laws governing the playing of the jack-pot require remodeling. This peculiar phase of poker is not old enough to have crystallized into its concrete form. As it is universally played, stringent rules should be adopted for it. Such rules as are presented are in accordance with those employed in New York City. The right to play the jack-pot at all is disputed by many

players. The argument against it is that it is a diabolical invention of kitty. It is true that the more frequent are jack-pots, the larger the earnings of the kitty.)

All the rules of poker are made to prevent fraud. Every rule should be strictly adhered to.

VALUE OF THE HANDS AT POKER.

"Our hands are full."

Henry IV., Part I. Act III., Scene 2d.

Singly each card possesses its ordinary value, as in whist.

NO PAIRS.

The lowest hand is one in which, in the five cards, there are no pairs, nor are the cards of the same suit, nor is there a sequence. Its value would depend on its highest card. Thus, one hand may contain a two of spades, a four of hearts, an eight of diamonds, a jack of clubs, and an ace of diamonds. This hand would be better than one which held only a king of diamonds as its highest card. It is not uncommon, even when betting is made on a false straight, that when one adversary calls the other no pair can be shown. Then the highest card wins. (See farther on in regard to straights and flushes.)

ONE PAIR.

The values of the cards being the same as in whist, a pair of threes, as the three of diamonds and three of spades, is better than the deuce of diamonds or the deuce of spades, as a pair of aces are better than a pair of kings or a pair of queens better than a pair of jacks. If each player, when two are engaged, has pairs which are alike, as, say, each one has a pair of queens, the next highest card wins. Say the two players had each queens. In one hand is a king, in the other a jack. The hand with the queens and king would win. Occasionally this parity of hands may require the second or even the third card after the pair to decide on the value of the hand. One of the rarest things is to see the same cards held exactly by two hands. This may occur, but never when threes, fulls, or fours are held. (Threes and fulls will be explained later.)

TWO PAIRS.

Two pairs beat a single pair. Of the two pairs the higher wins when pitted against any other two pairs. A pair of aces and a pair of deuces are better than a pair of kings and a pair of queens. A pair of sixes and threes are better than a pair of fives and fours. If

the two pairs are alike, then the single card left decides the value of the hand.

THREES OR TRIPLETS.

By threes or triplets is meant that the player holds three cards of the same value, as three aces, or three tens, or three deuces. The three highest win. There can be no similarity of hands in threes.

THE STRAIGHT.

The straight, sometimes called a sequence, means that five cards are held which ascend in exact values. Thus, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, are numerical sequences. The straight has no reference to color. A straight may be composed of the five of hearts, six of diamonds, seven of clubs, eight of spades, and nine of hearts. The ace, king, queen, jack, ten, irrespective of suits, is a straight. The ace, however, in a straight may change in value, for it may be taken as the beginning of the straight; thus, an ace, a deuce, three, four, and five is a straight, but it is the lowest one; it would be beaten by a two, three, four, five, and six. As in all valuations, the best or highest straight or sequence wins. A straight beginning with a nine and ending with a king is not as good as one commencing with a ten and ending with an ace. Two hands may hold straights

of the same value ; and when this happens the pool is divided between the two players holding the straights.

FLUSH.

When five cards of the same suit are held, this is a flush. Any five spades, or five clubs, diamonds, or hearts, is a flush. The hand holding the highest card in the flush wins. A two, three, four, five, headed by an ace of the same suit, is better than an eight, ten, jack, queen, and king of the same suit. In the flush two hands may be made of exactly the same value ; in this case the pool is divided.

THE FULL.

By the full is understood a hand which contains not only threes, but a pair. Thus, a full hand may be composed of three threes and two deuces, or three aces and two kings. Just like in two pairs, the higher threes decide in the value of the hand. Three fours and two twos are better than three threes and two aces. Two similar hands in a full do not exist.

FOURS.

This is a rare hand to hold, and means that in the five cards, four cards are of the same value. Thus four deuces is a four, as are four

aces. The highest fours win. There can be no similar hands in fours.

THE STRAIGHT FLUSH.

This is the most unusual of all hands to hold, and is the highest in value. By a straight flush is meant that the five cards are not alone of the same suit, but have a regular numerical progression. It is not only a straight, but also a flush. Thus, a two, three, four, five, six of spades is a straight flush, as is a ten, jack, queen, king, and ace of clubs or any other suit. Many games of poker may be played and a straight flush never seen. Two straight flushes of the same value may be made at the same time. It is within the possibility of cards, but players have rarely, if ever, seen this double event.

RECAPITULATION.

The values of the hands at poker are in the following order :

1. No pairs. (Highest card wins.)
2. One pair.
3. Two pairs.
4. Threes or triplets.
5. The straight or sequence.
6. The flush.
7. The full.
8. Fours.
9. The straight flush.

HOW THE GAME IS PLAYED.

“ *But is this law ?* ”

Hamlet. Act V., Scene 1st.

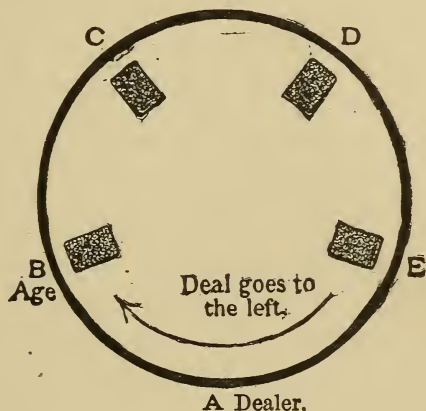
Poker is played with a full pack of 52 cards.

The number of players should be limited to six. Five is the best number, but seven can play ; but when seven play, as each player receives five cards thirty-five cards have been dealt, and this only leaves seventeen cards. As every player has five cards dealt to him and has a right to draw five cards, there are not sufficient cards for this ; and when seven play recourse must be had to the discard. *Now, as every rule in poker is devised as a protection against fraud, seven players should not be permitted.*

For the deal, as in whist, one card is thrown to each person, face up, and the lowest deals. There is some slight advantage in dealing. The cards are shuffled, and cut by the person to the left of the dealer. The dealer gives in rotation one card singly to each player, dealing the cards to the left. The deal goes to the left. Each player receives five cards.

Before the deal commences, the player to the left of the dealer puts his stake on the table. This player to the left is called the age, and the stake he puts up is called the blind. It is an invitation, as it were, to the others to make their

bets. This player who has the age has certain advantages or disadvantages, which will be afterward explained. As the deal always goes to the left, the deal passing after every round of the game, the position of the age is always changing in regular order.



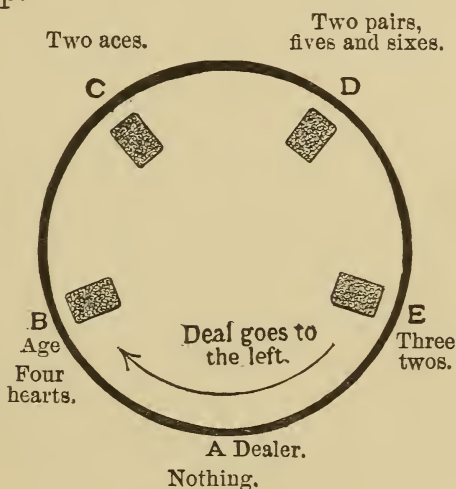
The circle represents the table, and A, B, C, D, E, the players. When A deals, B is the age, and must ante. As the deal goes to the left, after every round, B would be the next dealer and C the age. When E is dealer, A is the age.

Before the dealer gives any cards, or the game is commenced, a limit is agreed upon. The necessity of a limit must be at once insisted upon, because no game of poker is possible without it. It acts as a curb, and prevents losses. To play without a limit would be the same as to wager \$1000 in a game of whist or euchre. It may be

then supposed that the players A, B, C, D, and E have agreed that ten cents be the limit. When A deals, B may put on the table one chip, the chip representing one cent, and he does this before receiving any cards. He may put up two, three, four, or five chips, but when he reaches five chips he is at the limit of the game, because should he or any of the other players come in, he or they would have to double the blind, which if he put up five would be ten, and ten is the limit of the game. If he put up one he would have to double it if he came in. No bet then can be made of any kind higher than ten chips, if ten be the limit. But the ten chips or ten cents can be accepted as the wager and ten chips more bet, and this ten repeated over and over again, but eleven chips cannot be bet. The limit is ten. The person who is the age has the advantage of playing or betting last. If he has good cards he may be willing to come in. He has one chip on the table, which he will lose if any one else comes in, and he is unwilling to put up another chip. If he has a bad hand he abandons his one chip. This is to his disadvantage. The advantage of the position is that if he has a good hand, being the last player, he can augment the stake. An augmentation of the stake by the age will be afterward explained.

It is C who makes the first wager, or C may

have nothing. Then D may come in, or E, or the dealer, A. It is never obligatory to play in poker; you may make a wager or not as you please, with the exception of the age, who must risk a chip.



With the diagram and the players an imaginary game can now be carried on.

A deals, B puts up one chip for a blind, the limit of betting is ten, and the cards are dealt five to each person. The cards are looked at. C is the first to bet. Say he has a pair of aces in his hand; D two pairs, a pair of fives and a pair of sixes; E has three twos; A, the dealer, no pairs at all, a valueless hand; and B, who comes in last, four hearts. C, D, E have all of them cards of some value; B has, so far, cards which are worthless, but if he could get an-

other heart he would have an excellent hand, and make a flush. C, D, E come in, as does B. They each have put up two chips, and B, who was the age, makes his stake good by putting up another chip. A, the dealer, who holds nothing, does not enter at all. Now the cards are drawn, just as in *écarté*. The players ask for cards, and can take up to five cards—that is, as many cards as they want. B, who is after the dealer, is helped first. He asks for one card. He has four hearts, and wants to get another heart. C, who has two aces, asks for three cards. He may make two pairs, taking in another pair, or he might draw another ace, which would make him three aces, or he might draw three cards all of the same value, a triplet, making him a full, or he might take in two more aces, making him have four of a kind. D, who has two pairs, fives and sixes, might also, by taking one card, get another five or six, and so have a full. E, who has three twos, might draw two cards, helping, just like C, to make four or a full. A, who dealt, has nothing, and does not ask for new cards, for, once having passed, he is out of the game for the round.

B, who was the age, has four hearts. It might be that he held the two, three, four, and five of hearts. Should he draw the six of hearts he would have a straight flush, which would be

almost invincible. If his hand consisted of the ace, king, queen, jack, and he were to draw the ten, there would be no possibility of his losing. If he drew any heart, he would make a single flush, which is a strong hand. The cards are then dealt, the dealer giving to each one exactly the number of cards he asks for.

B, one card, drawn to a flush.

C, three cards, drawn to a pair.

D, one card, drawn to two pairs.

E, two cards, drawn to threes.

The discarded cards are thrown toward the dealer before the new cards are given. Now the question arises: Whose hand has been improved? Nobody can tell. C's two aces is a fair hand; but of all of them before the draw E's was the best hand, he had three deuces. The player may gain some information as to the character of the hands from the number of cards drawn. If a player had drawn five new cards, or four new cards, the certainty would be that he held in neither case a pair, but was trusting to luck to draw something. E has taken two cards. That looks as if he had threes. D and B have both taken one card. Either of them may hold threes. This might not be likely, or they would have shown perhaps by an early bet that they held good hands. But nothing

absolutely certain can be gleaned from the draw, for B, who has nothing, may be drawing for a card to make a straight, or a flush, or he may have two pairs.

Let the giving of the new cards in this case, B, C, D, and E, have their hands precisely in the same condition as before the draw. C has his pair of aces; D his two pairs; E his three twos; B has drawn a spade, and his hand is good for nothing—just as it was when he came in. Now the betting commences. C wagers one chip; D “sees it,” or puts up one chip; he has two pairs; E, who has three twos, wagers the one chip of C and D, and “raises” them ten chips. B is frightened. It is his turn next, and he goes out, relinquishing his two chips. If C, with one pair of aces, is a conservative player, has gone out, D, who has only two small pairs, will give up also. Then all the players having declined to “see” or bet E’s ten chips, E will take the pool. There has been no bluffing. E has simply backed up his hand. Not being called, he is not forced to show his hand.

Suppose, however, in the drawing, a good or helping card had been secured by only C, who held the pair of aces, and that he had drawn another ace. When B passed out, C, having the best threes, would have seen E’s hand, accepted the wager of ten, and raised an additional ten.

D, with two pairs only, caught between the cross-fires, would have beaten a precipitate retreat. E, with three twos, might have thought that C was bluffing. Prudence would dictate his not betting any more. He would have only seen C, and the hands being exposed, C's three aces would have won the twenty-one chips E had bet. Having been called by E, both hands are shown.

Taking the same condition of hands, B with a flush to draw, C with two aces, D with two pairs, and E with three twos, we will suppose that there has been this time no improvement in the hands. The betting is the same as before. C bets one chip, D sees it, and E goes ten better. B has not improved his hand at all. He thinks that E also actually has three twos and is bluffing. He sees E's ten, and bets ten better. C and D are frightened out as before. E is not quite certain. B may have made a straight or a full. His threes are the smallest in the pack. E may have been in bad luck. He hesitates. B looks very determined. E gives up, will not see the additional ten, and then B wins, or takes the pool and the wagers. He does not show his hand. He has not been called. This is a legitimate bluff. B, being the age, has had some little advantage of the position.

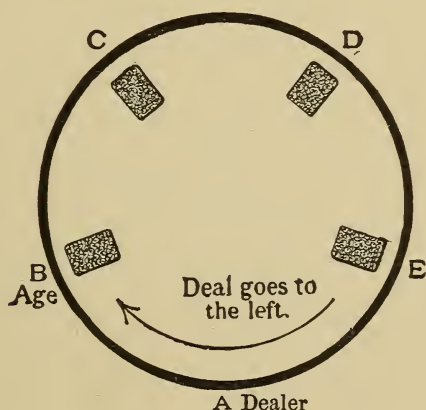
Taking again the same players with the same

cards : suppose the hands had been improved by the drawing ; that C had drawn two more aces, that D had drawn another six, that E had added two kings to his threes, and that B had made that *rara avis*, a straight flush. Then the ten, as a limit, would be repeated by each player any number of times. C with the four aces knows that in all the multitudinous changes of cards there can be but one chance against him—the straight flush. To his misfortune, when the hands are called he finds this straight flush. If D and E are intelligent players, after they have made several bets which their adversaries have capped with other bets, they would have gone out, satisfied that they held losing hands. No combination of cards is impossible in poker. Two hands, each holding fours, have been often seen struggling for the victory, and fours have more than once succumbed to a straight flush.

THE ELDER HAND.

The condition of the elder hand or age must now be considered in regard to such advantage as it may possess, and raising in general be explained. Before any new cards are taken, raising is legitimate. Referring to the diagram of the table and players, B being the age, and the last one to come in, C, D, E, and A have seen the wager of two chips, or ten chips ; when it is B's

turn to come in he can say: "I make my ante good; or my blind good, and I raise it ten." This is the bet before any cards have been dealt. If then (as in the after case, when cards have been drawn, as previously explained) C, D, or E and A *do not* see B's bet, though they have put up their two chips each, B wins. If any of the players, however, see this extra wager of ten, made before new cards are given, they are all said "to stay in." Then the new cards are given to them as before, and the status of the game remains the same.

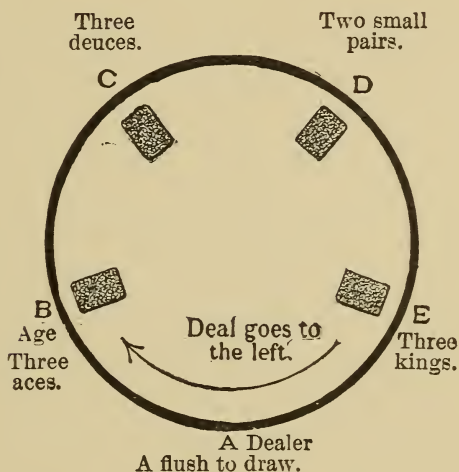


B being the age, the others coming in with inferior hands, say, B has the best cards, a flush. As he is the last to come in, when it is his turn he makes his ante good and raises it ten before cards are drawn. All the other players are frightened and go out. They will

not see the wager ; B takes the two chips or the ten chips each of the others has put up at the beginning. He need not show his hand, because no one had seen his bet. Suppose, however, all had gone out but D, who held two pairs, or one pair ; D draws one card and makes a full, or three cards and makes a full, he would accept any of B's bets, and the wagers would be exactly as in the former cases cited. But if he supposed B, the age, had nothing at all, and raised ten at the start, before any cards were taken, he might not draw any cards at all, or only one card. Other players, who came in with one pair, or two small pairs, might not see his next bet, that is, if he carried out his purpose of betting the limit. They would believe that he really held a strong hand.

This is one of the advantages of the position, and is called holding the age. Raising can be made, however, by any of the players. Say B, the age, has put up his blind, one chip. C comes in, sees the chip ; putting up his two, and raising it two. This would be bad play, because C would intimidate only the age, B, and drive him out. There are three more players to come after him. It would be bad policy then for C to raise. He would, if a good player, wait. If any one raised after him, before cards were taken, he would see this raise, and possibly raise it

again. Taking again the explanation with the diagram, the following case is presented :



C comes in. It is not his place to raise, nor is it D's, but E, with three kings, raises the ante ten. A, who has a chance to make a flush, comes in, as do B and C. D may or may not come in. Say D goes out. B, C, and A have met E's raise. Cards are drawn with no improvement. C bets first, say one chip. D is out. E, who has originally raised the blind, bets ten more. A, whose hand has not improved, passes out. B, who has three aces, sees the new bet of ten, and bets ten more. C is intimidated. E believes he has the best hand, and may make another bet. Say he sees B, and on showing cards he loses. Innumerable combina-

tions might be presented : as of D holding three kings, an E three aces ; C coming in with the ante, and D seeing the raise of ten before cards have been drawn, and raising it ten more.

Two hands may each hold flushes, and standing "pat," that is, having good cards (a perfect hand, before a card is drawn), raise each other in the first stage of the game. In poker position has much to do with the game, and the age has only this advantage of position, for the chances of his having a good hand, so as not to lose the one chip he has been forced to put up, are small. He wagers his chip without having seen his cards, while the others know what they have before they come in.

It is in "raising," entirely apart from such cheating as may arise from "forcing a card," that fraud in poker is possible, and a fraud exceedingly difficult to detect. A player may be "forced out" or "raised out" by a combination of two players who have previously agreed to such a rascally performance. Taking the diagram with the same players, C and E, or any two players, may have agreed to combine and raise out other players. This conspiracy, as has been stated, is exceedingly difficult to detect. Players have not the right to even say to one another in private, "When I raise you, you may be sure I have a hand." It gives to each of

them an undue advantage. It is a secret arrangement, and, being such, is nothing else than a fraud.

OF DRAWING.

If the player determines to draw to a pair, he draws three cards. If he draws to two pairs, he draws one card.

If he holds three to begin with, he draws two cards, in order to have the best chance of making a full, inasmuch as in playing pairs are apt to run together. But to deceive his adversaries, and make them think he has nothing better than two pairs, a sharp player will draw but one card to his threes.

It is advisable sometimes to keep an ace or other high card as an "outsider" with a small pair, and draw two cards—thus taking the chances of matching the high card, and so getting two good pairs, or possibly something better,—while at the same time others may be deceived into believing that the player is drawing to threes.

When drawing to cards of the same suit to try to make a flush, or to cards of successive denominations to try to make a sequence, only one card is to be taken. This will be needed to fill out the flush or the sequence. But it is seldom advisable to venture a draw for either a flush or sequence when more than one card is required to complete the hand.

When a player holds fours in his original hand, this is as good as it can be ; and yet it is best to throw away the outside card and draw one, because others may then think he is only drawing to two pairs, or for a flush or sequence, and will not suspect the value of the hand.

When one is in (though he ought seldom to be) without even as much as a pair, his choice must be either to discard four cards, or three cards, and draw to the highest or two highest in the hand, or throw away the whole hand and draw five, or look content and serious, stand pat, and bet high.

The player determining to try this last alternative on a worthless hand had generally better begin by raising when he goes in, or else nobody will be likely to believe in his pretended strong hand.

PROBABILITIES.

The probabilities of receiving a specified poker hand in the deal are as follows :

Straight flush	1 in 65,000 deals.
Fours	1 " 4,164 "
Full	1 " 693 "
Flush	1 " 507 "
Straight (sequence)	1 " 254 "
Threes	1 " 45 "
Two pairs	1 " 20 "
One pair	1 " $1\frac{3}{10}$ "
Or, 10 in	13 "

The draw, of course, modifies these proportions, and gives the player increased chances. But it would require too much space to give the chances in these cases.

TECHNICAL TERMS KNOWN IN POKER.

THE AGE. — Designation of the player whose place is after the dealer. The age never passes.

THE ANTE. — The bet made by the dealer, and applicable to any of the stakes put up in the game, at the entrance of the players.

BLAZE. — A hand which holds all the picture cards, an ace being considered as a court card. It beats two pairs. The blaze is rarely played, and should be ruled out.

BLIND. — This is the stake put up by the age. He doubles it if he wishes to play. Not wanting to play, he abandons it. All the players double the blind.

CALL. — This term means that one player sees the bet of another, and will not advance the bet. Then the cards are shown. But it is only the last bettor, or the one nearest to the player to the right of the person who has raised, who can call, and so calling, no one else betting higher, this closes the game.

CHIPS. — Counters.

TO CHIP IN. — To put counters on the table. Equivalent to entering into the game.

DISCARD. — To throw out cards from the hand first dealt.

DRAW. — To take new cards.

ELDEST HAND. — The player to the left of the dealer.

FILLING. — To improve the hand by means of the cards drawn.

FREEZE-OUT. — Five players each take the same number of cards, and play until one of them has won all the chips or counters. Those who lose are “frozen out.”

GOING BETTER. — When a player raises or bets an amount higher than the player to the right of him, he “raises.”

GOING IN. — The elder hand makes his “blind good”; that is, he accepts the wagers of the rest, and adding more chips, makes his blind good. Any one entering the game “goes in.”

GOING OUT. — The reverse of the above.

LIMIT. — Before a game is commenced it is agreed that so many chips shall be the limit. Above this no bet can be made; but the amount of the limit in the betting may be made over and over again. No game ever should be played without a limit.

MAKING GOOD. — Putting up the number of chips any one else has bet.

ORIGINAL HAND. — The first five cards dealt before the draw.

PAT HAND. — Is a hand as it is first dealt, by supposition only a perfect hand ; as a straight, a flush, or a full. A pat hand may have nothing in it. “I play pat,” means that a player does not want any cards in the draw.

PASS. — When a player does not come in at all, or gives up his hand after a raise, this is a pass.

THE POT. — All the chips on the table.

TO SEE. — Is equivalent to calling a bet.

TO STRADDLE. — To double the ante.

There are innumerable cant terms peculiar to localities. To keep two small cards and an ace is called holding up “a kicker.” This draw is made by the player, hopeful of getting two pairs, with the additional ace or king. The term two pairs, “queens up,” means that the queens are the highest cards of the two pairs. “Tens up” would mean that the tens were the highest cards. A full, “kings up”; a flush, “ace up”; can be at once understood. When a big bet is made which drives out the other players, they are sometimes said to be “blown out.”

THE JACK-POT.

The jack-pot may be an innovation, and contrary to the traditions of the game, but it is universally accepted to-day. It differs from anything else in the game, because it arbitrarily

forces every player to ante. In all other phases of poker it is only the age who antes. In the prehistoric period of poker the way of playing when every one passed out was for the age to withdraw his ante. When he dealt, in his turn, the next age put up the ante. It was not unusual for several rounds to be dealt, and for everybody to pass out. This became monotonous; and then somebody invented the jack-pot.

The way of playing the jack-pot is as follows: When all pass out, the age leaves up his ante, and all the other players put up their antes or chips in equal amounts to the age's ante. The cards are dealt for the next round by the next player. It differs again from the ordinary game, inasmuch as there is no elder hand, no one holding the age.

To open the jack-pot, some one must have at the least a pair of jacks. He can open it then with jacks or better. But if no one has a pair of jacks, or better, each player again contributes a chip, and a new deal is in order. A half dozen rounds may be dealt, and the jack-pot not opened. There is nothing obligatory about entering. A player may hold a pair of jacks and not open. Supposing a player has a pair of jacks or better, he opens the jack-pot, that is, he wagers so many chips. The rest see it, or not, as they

please. If they do not see his wager, he takes the pot. The opener makes, however, the first bet, and the betting proceeds to his left as in the ordinary game.

Sometimes, by prior arrangement, an ascending scale is determined on for opening the jack-pot, beginning with jacks. At the first round, say it is not opened, no one having jacks or better. Then for the second round, queens or better are required ; for the third, kings or better ; and for the fourth, aces or better. Sometimes, when the round of aces is reached, the opening continues at aces. Occasionally, the opening changes in the descending scale, after aces are reached, going down to kings, then to queens, and to jacks again. But this ascending or descending scale is not often played, because it leads to frequent mistakes. The best way is to make jacks the openers, and to keep the opening at jacks. Of course anything better than jacks, as a pair of queens, kings, or aces, and all the other combinations, open the jack-pot. The opener of the jack-pot must show his hand at the end of the round.

There is one case of opening the jack-pot which leads to many disputes. The rule being that jacks will open the pot, how shall this be construed when a player has a pair of jacks, his hand being made up, say, of the jack of dia-

monds, the jack of hearts, and three other hearts? He has a perfect right to open. He has in his jacks the key to the situation. But has he the privilege of throwing away a jack, say his jack of diamonds, and then draw, hoping to make a heart flush? Now, it may happen that A opens, and has the two jacks, with the combination of cards just presented, B and C come in, and D raises. A may want to take the risk of throwing away his jack of diamonds, so as to draw the flush. Sometimes it has been decided that the player may draw for the flush, on condition that he puts the card he discards face down before him, so that he may show after the round that he had a pair of jacks, because there is a penalty, to be explained afterward, for a mistake made in opening the jack-pot. It has been declared that this drawing to a flush cannot be made. In some clubs an arrangement has been made, that the person drawing for the flush should announce the same, exhibiting the discarded picture-card. But this is all against the opener of the jack-pot, as it exposes his hand. The best authorities on this subject have decided that the player opening the jack-pot must show cards which contained the positive evidence that he held a hand of a fixed value. It may be improved by the draw, as a pair made, two pairs, or threes, or fulls, but if he is the opener

he cannot draw to a straight or a flush. Aside from an exact construction of the rule, as jack-pots are the most important of all the phases of the game, the amount of chips on the table being the largest, when it is played, to put a card on the table is to favor fraud. The editor, notwithstanding many differences of ideas advanced in regard to this point, is most decidedly of the opinion that this rule should be enforced. Of course this has nothing to do with the rest of the players who come in. They may draw as they please, and come in with anything they like.

When a jack-pot is opened through a mistake of the player, he has to pay for his error, and this penalty should be insisted upon. This penalty varies according to agreement. Sometimes the person making the blunder is mulcted to three times the amount in the pot. This we think to be too severe. The fact of making the mistake, though the error is discovered before the cards are drawn, makes no difference. The party making the blunder is ruled out. Suppose that A has made this mistake, is not aware of it at once, and B, C, D, and E enter. A declares his mistake, and is ruled out. Then the round may begin over again ; but if any others of the players have a pair of opening cards, they open the pot. The status of the other players is not

changed by A's mistake. Even if A does not find out his error, and has drawn cards, and the others have done the same, and then A makes known his error, the rule holds good. If the others have not had openers, even if one player with a pair of deuces had drawn two other deuces, it makes no matter. It is for this reason that the hand of the person opening the jack-pot should always be closely scrutinized. He must expose it after the round, whether he has lost or won.

The temptation to open a jack-pot by a rascally player being great, the pot always being large, the utmost vigilance should be used. Experience shows that a great many of the frauds of poker are concentrated around jack-pots.

THE STRADDLE.

"I shall raise you by and by."

Julius Cæsar. Act IV., Scene 3d.

The straddle is simply an augmentation of the original ante. A being the dealer, B the age, and C putting up, say, one chip, it being so far two chips to come in, C may straddle — that is, he puts up two chips, and says, "I straddle." Then it takes four chips to come in. If B wants to make his blind good he puts in three more chips, as do all the other players. But if B declines to see the straddle, C takes B's chip. When

the anteing takes place, or coming in prior to receiving cards in the draw, the person who has straddled is the last to ante, or make good. This gives him the opportunity of position, and he can raise. When the draw is completed, B's age is retained, just as heretofore, and he has the last betting. The advantage to the straddler is only before the draw. But the straddle must come from the player after the age, and from no other. A dealing, B is the age, and C can straddle—E cannot, but E can over-straddle B within the limit.

THE AGE.

"Mark you this."

Much Ado About Nothing. Act I., Scene 1st.

Although everybody is supposed to know what the "age" means at poker, there is no rule more commonly blundered about. The rule must be taken in its strictest sense. In no manner whatsoever ought it to be departed from except in jack-pot. If the age B passes out, abandons his chip, and D comes in and all the rest, though B is out of the game D must bet first. It may be a relic of superstition, this tenacious holding of the age, but all conservative players insist on the maintenance of the rule. What it does, when once established, is to preclude constant mistakes and doubts as to the first bet.

The only exception is then in the jack-pot. In the jack-pot the age has made a forced contribution, and his age has gone, according to the rule of jack-pots. (See Jack-pot.)

ADVICE TO PLAYERS.

"Therefore be advised."

Merchant of Venice. Act II., Scene 1st.

There are no rules for playing poker so as to win. Advice may be given so as to limit losses. All absolute laws as to how you must play end in disaster. A good player varies his game. He may play a poor game for a while on purpose. To deceive is the acme of poker playing. The strong point in poker is never to lose your temper, either with those you are playing with or, more particularly, with the cards. There is no sympathy at poker. Always keep cool. If you lose your head you will lose all your chips. Poker being as much a criterion of character as anything else, keep in the shade your personalities. As Mr. Cable has it, "a man who can play delightfully on a guitar and keep a knife in his boot" (see p. 12) would be a perfect poker player. Always believe in the equalization of chances. If your king flush is beaten twice hand running by an ace flush to-day, to-morrow you will hold the ace flushes and your

adversaries the king flushes. If you begin to draw for flushes and straights and cannot fill them, you must continue trying to fill them, otherwise you throw away your chance of equalizing your draw. Patience is one of the strong points of poker, just as much as cheek. He who waits longest finds his opportunity. A player who never bluffs at poker is not in sympathy with the game. His battery is never masked. The enemy gives him a wide berth; when his guns are shotted no foes ever approach. He fires a volley and kills a lame duck. Too much curiosity is ruinous. All the money saved at poker comes from not seeing. To be over-timid is an equal fault. It is perfectly legitimate to tell stories at poker. All is fair in love, war, and poker.

To adhere to anything but the strictly truthful brings with poker no moral obliquity. As it is impossible for some players not to lie when they play, this want of veracity brings its own cure. It is not, however, a good rule to tell stories about your hand. You may, if you have the talent for such things, assume an innocent guise with your face alone. This is the most effective of lures. It is best never to show your hand at all, if not called, and to remain silent in regard to its merits. A solemn mystery in regard to your cards is the most effective. Though

a hand which is miscalled when shown rests solely on its face value, avoid doing this. It should, in fact, never be permitted. It induces fraud. An adversary might throw down his cards, the winning ones, when another player announced something which he did not have. As the holder of the best cards has thrown them away, they cannot be found again, and he loses, whereas he should have won. It is, at the least, an ungentlemanly trick. It irritates the best-tempered players. When a player leaves the room no hand should be dealt him. No two persons ever ought to have an interest in the same hand. The reasons for this are legion. The strongest is, that it prevents rascality. Then, again, when another player takes the hand of a person who is not present, and enters or makes a bet, it gives an additional strength to the hand, which is unfair. Never play poker without a limit. It is then the most dangerous of all games.

POSITION AND PROBABILITIES.

"That the strait pass was damm'd."

Cymbeline. Act V., Scene 3d.

The study of the theory of probabilities for the playing of poker, *i. e.*, how to win at it, may be very good in its way. The examination of the chance laws is a most interesting one. For

practical use they are of no value. No one save a genius, in the possession of an exceptional memory, playing like an automaton, could carry these laws into actual practice, and such a gifted individual does not usually sit at a poker-table.

Everybody knows that before the draw one pair is more commonly held than two pairs ; and that after the draw, to receive another pair is more usual than to get a third card, which makes threes. The progression of difficulties is at once understood when the scale of winning combinations is examined, and for the rarity of such combinations the laws of chance may be studied.

For those interested in such mathematical problems, the laws of chance relative to poker are presented in this volume, due to such authorities as Pole and Proctor. "Cavendish" has also written a learned paper on this same topic, but we do not print it, as being too abstract for common use.

There are some very simple, common-sense facts in poker in regard to the advantages of position, which positions are, of course, always changing.

The hand after the age, designated as C, after A the dealer, and B the age, has the worst position. If he has anything he comes in first, and has to stand the entrance or the possible raises

of all who are after him. C then is in the position of a man running the gauntlet. For position the advantage lies with the last man, who is the age. He winds up the performance. If he happens to hold a good hand, anything above the average — as a pair of aces, or two pairs — he should raise before the draw is made. The chances are that he has the best hand, or even if he has not, that he forces out some of the others. They will not see his raise, and he carries off the pool.

If all the other players go out, the dealer with a low pair has a good chance of winning against the blind. It is the exact reverse of the position of C, who plays when he enters against four. A, the dealer, plays only against B, the blind. The chances are that the blind has nothing, and gives up.

For the first player after the age, or C, to raise is a stupidity. All he can do is then to win the age's half ante; for if he has not a fair hand, the age will give it up. This raise too at the beginning drives out all the others, unless they hold good hands. C must always play a waiting game. If he has a strong hand, he sees the raises or may raise in his turn.

If C comes in it is not wise for D to raise, because E and A and B are after him. The blind, who is never given credit for holding anything,

is in the best position to raise, not alone because he is the last, but for the reason that his raise is the most unexpected. It is, therefore, good tactics if he has a pair over the average to raise. But the age still remains the most wasting as to chips of all the positions.

If a player were to retain the age through a whole game, there are ninety-nine chances in a hundred that he would lose. A great many chips are lost by the age by the mere fact of his doubling his ante, or making his blind good, relying on his holding one small pair, lower than the average. Taking three minutes as the average time to finish one round at poker, when five are playing, within an hour the ante-man will have put up twenty chips. If he plays three hours, he has offered up sixty chips. If he has made his blind good, that would be one hundred and twenty chips. The chances would be, that as age he held originally some fair hands. The probabilities, if given all in his favor, would be when he won with some of his hands. But calculating all to his advantage, it is quite certain that if he comes in with a small pair he will lose in the three hours ninety chips. To have the age and to bluff with a small pair is very great folly, and this adds to ruin.

For the age to raise induces the players to believe that there is a bluff in the air, and it

looks, from a study of the game, as if the age were more constantly called than any other hand.

The dangers of the age cannot be too much expatiated upon. It is the finest and the worst position at the same time. Steady, experienced players, when more than one come in, often make it a rule to abandon their chip if they hold a pair lower than tens. C, if he knows what he is about, will never come in first with less than tens; and D ought to have even better. The percentage against C's winning then is very great.

“All in the draw.” When a person who holds the age believes in that, it is ruin. Suppose you do go in with two nines, and draw a third, making three nines. The chances are just as good for another player to have taken in another ten, or another jack, queen, king, or ace, and then you are beaten. You started too low, and your improvement is only so much the worse for you. It requires no explanation to understand that your adversary's two pairs, made during the draw, with their jacks up, are better than yours, with tens up.

To straddle is a weakness. It confers no possible benefit. You assume for the moment the apparent advantages of the age, and then when you want this advantage the most—that is, to

bet last—you have, according to the rule, to give it up. You have simply doubled the ante. This may or may not intimidate the rest of the players. It ought never to frighten out the age if he has a pair. The age, if he has a single pair, will see the straddle, with good chances of winning. The person who straddles often forgets that the active condition of the game is something entirely different from the passive one.

Entrance into the game by the last player, A the dealer, when C, D, and E are in, unless he has a good pair, is folly.

When players meet frequently, they all know that a wild player, if there is such a one among them, is certain to lose in the long run. Steady play—conservative poker—is absolutely sure to worst him. He may have occasional flights of luck, and draw “a tan-yard from a shoe-string”; but that kind of thing does not last long. He may win largely once in awhile, and all the rest of the time lose quite as largely.

It may be denied, but experienced players rarely enter without a pair of jacks or better. It is even under exceptional circumstances that they draw for a straight or a flush. At the first to go in, after the blind, they let the straights and flushes severely alone. If they have the age they will draw on straights and

flushes and may or may not raise. If there are many players, then old players take their chance with a flush or straight to draw to.

With all these explanations for playing, founded on common-sense principles, there are numerous exceptions. These exceptions do not arise from the laws of chance, but have to do with the idiosyncrasies of the players. Most of the money lost at poker comes from seeing. Curiosity is fatal. All the money saved arises from want of curiosity. Still, take the player who has won twice hand running, his hand having been called, if he makes a high bet a third time with a new hand, there are many chances that he is bluffing. It is not likely that he will have three times consecutively the best cards.

Whether to draw for a straight or a flush depends not only on position but how many cards your adversaries take. If you see the blind, and have, say, four hearts, or four clubs, spades, or diamonds, your four cards ending with a queen, king, or ace, and the other card being a queen, king, or ace, you have a pair. Are you to retain a pair or draw for a flush? If the majority of those before you draw one card, they may also be drawing to a flush or straight, but at the same time they may have two pairs or threes. If the majority of the adversaries draw one card, what should you do? We would not advise

throwing away the queens, but to draw three cards. If you make two pairs or three queens, your hand is above the average. But we would throw away a pair of tens. Having a straight to make, the same plan is recommended. If the flush is made, or the straight, of course the advantages of this hand are immense. The temptation to raise on a straight to be made or a flush to be made is very great, as it is likewise for players having the making of these two combinations to see the raises. They look, when one card is drawn, like two pairs or threes in hand. The player raising on a flush or straight in the future is bound to bet on it, and mostly wins, providing other players have only two small pairs. It is here that the bluff must be pushed home.

How to draw on threes, whether by taking two cards or by dispensing with their presence, asking for one card is only a question of expediency. Poker, in order to be well played, must be ever changing in its methods. Deceit is the constant element. It is quite unlikely that when C is raised by D, and that C only takes two cards, that he has not a *bona fide* triplet. If you have raised on two pairs, you had better treat the matter mildly, and if he raises, go out. Even four of a kind may be disguised by the drawing of one card, or by standing pat.

In fact, whether there is anything in a hand or not, can never be known until it is called ; with threes, is it then better to draw two cards or one ? If two cards were drawn, the chances of making a four are possible ; but at the same time, the value of the hand is given away to the players. The probabilities of having fours are 4,164 to 1 ; of a full, 693 to 1. Many players having threes, discard, invariably, the lowest card. They believe that the higher cards have been retained by the other hands coming in. The only thing in regard to the discard of the lowest card is, that once begun it must always be continued.

Theoretically, calculations as to what should happen with cards do not avail against what actually does take place. Luck is a perverse jade, and refuses to be bridled. In theory, in 10,900 games of poker there ought to occur at least fours ten times. In an actual game, fours never came out but once, and yet at one sitting, on three occasions fours have appeared and during the same time two straight flushes. More straights *per contra* by fifty per cent. were dealt in an actual game than should have been theoretically present. There were sixty dealt, while there should have been but forty, according to the books. Strangely enough, the threes tallied with the theory, and in two pairs and single

pairs the players and the theorists were wonderfully close.

A player ought in a certain way to equalize his chances, and do the same thing over and over again. This equalization of his chances, and the advantages of it, may not be apparent during one game, but only during a series of games. Win to-day, lose to-morrow, is the maxim. It is not the cards that change, it is human nature.

When a player takes but one card, it is a rule among conservative players to see his bet, if they have a good hand, but not to raise him. This rule is applied when only two are in. Two fulls may meet each other in this dull way. But it is foreign to the game of poker, and belongs to the automatic way of playing.

It is impossible to estimate the value of a hand. The heaviest losses may be made on four kings. Never think how much you may win on a good hand, but how much you can lose. There is no such thing as cowardice at poker. A player has stood on a pat, ace, king, flush, and, raising, seen without raising another flush which had drawn on four cards, with an ace, king, queen, flush, and thereby the holder of the pat hand saved innumerable chips — it having cost him no more than if he had had two pairs, ace high. Those who pity “your poor play” are by no means willing to share your risks.

Jack-pots have very much changed the character of the game, and in one respect to its detriment. On the other hand, it has equalized poker. It is really at best but a show of hands. A great deal depends in jack-pot on the character of the game, whether it is a high or a low one. Among conservative players, the first player, C, will not open on jacks; the risk is too great. If all pass to the dealer, he is safe to open on jacks. Some players will never open themselves or come in afterward without two good pairs, at the lowest kings up, or threes.

The losses at jack-pot, where the limit is reached every time, are heavier, it should be remembered, than at any other period during the game. Bluffing in the play of jack-pot should be eschewed—nothing is more dangerous. The chances are, that starting in with good hands, the bluff will be seen. A conservative player is never tempted in a jack-pot, with a flush or straight to be drawn to. To raise the opener of a jack-pot requires a good hand. If the player after the opener raises, and the opener raises in his turn, do nothing more than call, unless a superlative hand is there.

A trick in the jack-pot, when all have passed up to E and E opens, is for A, the last to come in, to raise him. All the others are weak, having passed out once, and it is likely that E will

drop. But this is, like all things in poker, uncertain.

In all these hints as to playing poker, the supposition is, that there is a limit. In fact, this treatise on poker is written only for those who play with a limit. To play poker without a limit is ruin. The game without a limit brings to the front all the rascals. It is a temptation to fraud.

It is rather difficult to state what shall be the limit. Penny-ante, with a limit of 20 cents, suffices for all amusement. The losses may be \$5 ; with a \$1 limit, \$10 ; with a \$2 limit, \$75 ; with a \$5 limit, \$250. It is the limit which largely increases the losses. A player may lose \$5 and go to bed happy. But with a loss of \$250, it is pretty certain that the player does not sleep sweetly. A heavy game is destructive of poker. No purse is big enough to stand it. In fact, harmless as is poker when played with reason, when unreasonably indulged in it ends with desolation and dishonor.

PLAYING THE PAT HAND.

"Little better than played the jack with us."

Tempest. Act IV., Scene 1st.

The pat hand means a hand which is played without having recourse to the draw. It may contain anything, from cards of no value up to a straight flush. There are all possibilities in a

pat hand. Sometimes a player will raise on a pat hand according to position, and when called may exhibit two poor or two good pairs, or threes. He has played a mongrel pat. He had something and wanted to make his hand appear stronger than it really was. Such a hand containing two small pairs or three deuces, if started by a raise and backed up by a bluff, might make a better hand of threes, or a very low straight, take water.

Where poker is played according to the spirit of the game, it is pretty certain that one eighth of the pat hands are bogus ; because they are made to appear more frequently than the laws of chance permit. It is a very puzzling play to face with success. A good player, however, often employs it. When in the draw the first player who comes in refuses any fresh cards, it looks as if he really had pat a ready-made hand. When several are in, and bet a single chip, showing little strength, the final raise on the pat hand, which has nothing, generally takes the pot.

When a real pat hand, which has a straight, flush, full, fours, or a straight flush comes to a player, the holding of either of them often induces an overestimation of their values. The straight may begin with an ace and end with a five, then it is the lowest ; or it may be a flush with only ten high, or a full of deuces. The

better it is, the more you may count on its winning ; but never lose your head over a pat hand. Nothing is invincible in poker but a straight flush, ace high.

With a *bona fide* pat in hand, having position, and raising, watch out for those drawing one card, if, after your final raise, they raise back on you. If your straight is low, or your flush is low, or your full is low, you might be then very expensively beaten.

The pat hand with nothing in it, is, among good players, a very likely bluff. If it wins it is always shown by them. Then a reputation for bluffing is gained by the player, which is exactly what he has been trying to establish.

It is, of course, impossible with a simulated pat hand not to bet on it. The least timidity exposes it. That would be like a battery having a heavy gun letting off a squib. Occasionally a wheedling bet, however, as if the player implored the others to see him, wins the pot. The other players think it a tempting lure, and say, "No, I thank you !" and are taken in.

PUSHING YOUR LUCK.

"Pray you, come in."

Othello. Act III., Scene 1st.

What is called "pushing your luck" at poker is often expatiated upon. "All in the draw" is

frequently repeated. There are certain series which do appear in certain games. In poker there is only one which you can take advantage of. The player who holds most frequently two pairs will win. It is not the single immense pots which help the pile of chips, but the bulk of the small ones. Sometimes a player for hours will never hold a single pair higher than fives. Then he must learn patience and stay out. Then may come the picture-card periods and the threes. It is then wise under certain circumstances to play them for what they are worth. But "to push your luck," as many poker players understand it, is to come in with nothing, and trust to chance to improve. This always depletes a player.

Steadiness in play often makes up for losses. It is not a great hand that makes a player square or ahead, but often a moderate hand, so that it comes in at the right time. Threes win more than fulls. Bide your time, is the best rule. Show no impatience. Remember that there is equalization of chances. When losing, beware of making the straddle. To straddle is to force your luck. Be more observant than ever. Watch, when you are going "to the bad," who has won or who has lost. The winners may show greed or covetousness. Try and appreciate the differences in their methods of playing.

To cut short your losses can be done only in one way. This is a term frequently used, and its application is not well understood. It means simply this: You are willing to lose \$5; lose that and not another cent. That is "cutting short your losses." "Let your profits go on," means that you can keep on as long as you are winning. There is a great deal of selfishness about poker.

QUESTIONS AT POKER.

"I'd have it come to question."

King Lear. Act I., Scene 3d.

Every player, including the dealer, must announce how many cards he wants in tones loud enough to be heard by all. If the dealer does not take any cards, he must announce that he stands pat. This should be insisted upon. The dealer might hold a *bona fide* pat hand, and saying nothing, disguise the strength of his cards.

The indication made by a sign, as of thumping on the table when no cards are taken, if alone used is out of order. No pantomime is permissible in poker. A player may thump all he pleases, but must also say, "I do not want any cards." The thump may be misinterpreted, for

it is often used with a less degree of force, when players pass out.

It occasionally happens that a player's attention is unavoidably withdrawn for a moment during the draw, and he does not see or hear how many cards an opponent takes. This gives rise to one of the most disputed questions in poker. Is the dealer, upon being asked the question how many cards any player drew, bound to answer or not? Some players insist that he is not bound to and should not answer. Still every player has an equal right to know how many cards another drew. If four players of five in a game know how many cards a certain person drew, and the fifth player does not know, the four players have an advantage over the fifth.

The latest decision is that the dealer must answer if the question is put before a bet is made.

TABLE STAKES.

"I must have leave to pass."

Coriolanus. Act V., Scene 2d.

By table stakes, or playing table stakes, a person who bets must have the money before him. It prevents any credit. You cannot owe when "table stakes" are played, nor can you be

raised out for more chips or money than you have before you ; as far as reducing credit to a minimum, it is useful.

In olden times, when table stakes were played, it was employed as a device to drive out another player. If he had not the chips or money, he left. He had, however, one recourse. He might declare his ability to raise the money. Then the game was closed for the time being, and the hands sealed up for twelve hours. Then if he showed up with the money the game was continued.

THE FREEZE-OUT.

"I pray you, pass with your best violence."

Hamlet. Act V., Scene 2d.

The freeze-out is so called because when it is played all the performers are left out in the cold, with the exception of one. It is a duel at cards. In a certain way it has its advantages, because it limits individual losses. The players each take the same number of chips, and the game closes when one player has won them all. For example, five players each take twenty chips. There are one hundred chips out. The freeze-out is ended when one of the party has the one hundred chips. The game is carried on under all the rules of poker, with, however, this exception,

and that is in regard to the limit, for it never should be played without the limit. Say the limit is ten, one player or more is reduced to his last five chips. The player having the bulk of chips cannot then insist on the limit, he can only bet as many chips as his adversaries have. The freeze-out is not precisely a social game, because necessarily the players drop out one by one. At the conclusion of the game it is obvious that great caution is necessary. The last chips are carefully nursed. Jack-pots are not generally played in a freeze-out, but this is optional.

THE WIDOW, OR KITTY.

"If this be worth your hearing, mark it."

Cymbeline. Act I., Scene 1st.

By the widow, or as it is more commonly known as "kitty," is meant a percentage, taken in chips at certain occasions during the game of poker. This percentage may be put to the account of the club where the game is being played, and defrays the cost of cards, use of chips, gas, attendance, etc. The kitty may, however, be introduced when no expenses occur. When threes or better are made on a called hand, or when jack-pots are played, one chip is taken from the pool and put aside. These chips amount to quite a number at the end of the

game. Then they may be either divided among the players or made into jack-pots, as a consolation stake, and so wind up the game.

BUCK.

"A furtherer in the act."

Tempest. Act V., Scene 1st.

Originally the buck was a pocket-knife passing always to the left, indicating only the deal. Perhaps from the handle of the knife being of buckhorn the term is derived. By a process of evolution, the buck in poker is made sometimes a representative of value, and can be put up by the age. It may designate a certain number of chips, say, for instance, five. Then, if the age makes his blind good, he puts up five more chips. The rest of the players, when they come in, do the same thing. The person who wins it, when he is the age puts up the buck. When the game is over, the person who has issued the buck redeems it, at the value he put on it.

In some cases the buck is used in order to induce the jack-pot, of course by prior agreement. Whoever has the buck, when he deals puts it on the table with two or more chips, and then all contribute to making a jack-pot. Whoever wins the jack-pot, when it is his turn to deal puts it up, and another jack-pot is in order.

Too many jack-pots in a game, or forced contributions, destroy the character of poker. They come in sufficient frequency under ordinary circumstances.

A knife is not an obligatory buck. In the Far West a revolver on the table sometimes serves the purpose of a buck.

POKER PRINCIPLES AND CHANCE LAWS.

BY RICHARD A. PROCTOR.

"Think what a chance thou changest on."

Cymbeline. Act I., Scene 5th.

LET us consider briefly what are the chances for each different kind of hand at poker.

First, the total number of ways in which a set of five cards can be formed out of a pack containing 52 cards has to be determined. This is easy enough. You multiply together 52, 51, 50, 49, and 48, and divide the product by that obtained from multiplying together 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. You thus get 2,598,960 as the total number of poker hands.

It is very easy to determine the number of flushes and sequences and flush sequences which are possible.

Thus, begin with the flush sequences. We can have in each suit, ace, 2, 3, 4, 5 ; 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 ; 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 ; and so on up to 10, knave, queen, king, ace ; or in all there are ten flush sequences in each suit, forty flush sequences in all.

The number of sequences which are not flush may be thus determined. The arrangement of numbers may be any one of the ten just indicated. But taking any one of these, as 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, the three may be of any suit out of the four; so that each arrangement may be obtained in four different ways as respects the first card; so with the second, third, etc.; or in all 4 times 4 times 4 times 4, or 1,024, four of which only will be flushes. Thus there are 1,020 times 10, or 10,200 sequences which are not flush.

Now as respects flushes their number is very easily determined. The number of combinations of five cards which can be formed out of the 13 cards of a suit are given by multiplying together 13, 12, 11, 10, and 9, and dividing by the product of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5; this will be found to be 1,287. Thus there are 4 times 1,287, or 5,148 possible flushes. Of these, 5,108 are not sequence flushes.

The total number of "four" hands may be considered next. The process for finding it is very simple. There are of course only 13 fours, each of which can be taken with any one of the remaining 48 cards; so that there are 13 times 48, or 624 possible four hands.

Next to determine the number of "full hands." This is not difficult, but requires a little more attention. A full hand consists of a

triplet and a pair. Now manifestly there are four triplets of each kind—four sets of three aces, four of three kings, and so forth (for we may take each ace from the four aces in succession, leaving in each case a different triplet of aces; and so with the other denominations). Thus, in all, 4 times 13, or 52 different triplets can be formed out of the pack of 52 cards. When one of these triplets has been formed there remain 49 cards, out of which the total number of sets of two which can be formed is obtained by multiplying 49 by 48 and dividing by 2; whence we get 1,176 such combinations in all. But the total number of pairs which can be formed from among these 49 cards is much smaller. There are four twos, which (as cribbage teaches us) will give six pairs of twos; so there are six pairs of threes, six pairs of fours, and so on; or as there are only twelve possible kinds of pairs (after our triplet removed), there are in all 6 times 12, that is 72, possible pairs which can with the triplet form a full hand. Hence, as there are 52 possible triplets, the total number of full hands is 52 times 72, or 3,744.

The number of triplet hands which are not also fours or fulls (for every four hand contains triplets) follows at once from the above. There are 52 possible triplets, each of which can be

combined with 1,176 combinations of two cards out of the remaining 49, giving in all 52 times 1,176, or 61,152 sets of five, three at least of which are alike. But there are 624 four hands, each of which is not only a triplet hand, but will manifestly make four of the triplet hands our gross reckoning includes (for from every four you can make three triplets), and there are 3,744 full hands. These (to wit, 4,496 fours, and 5,744 fulls, or 6,240 hands in all) must be removed from our count, leaving 54,912 triplet hands (proper) in all.

This last result might have been obtained another way, which (as I shall use it for counting pair hands) I may as well indicate here. Taking any triplet of the 52, there remain 49 cards, one of which is of the same denomination as the triplet. Removing this, there are left 48 cards, out of which the number of sets of two which can be formed is obtained by multiplying 48 by 47 and dividing by 2; it is, therefore, 1,128, and among these 72 are pairs. There remain then 1,056 sets of two, any one of which can be combined with each of 52 triplets to give a triplet hand pure and simple. Thus, in all, there are 52 times 1,056 triplet hands, or 54,912, as before.

Next for double and single pairs.

From the whole pack of 52 cards we can form

6 times 13 pairs; for 6 aces can be formed, 6 pairs of twos, 6 pairs of threes, and so forth. Thus there are in all 78 different pairs. When we have taken out any pair, there remain 50 cards. From these we must remove the two cards of the same denomination, as either or both of these must not appear in the hand to be formed. There remain 48 cards, from which we can form 72 other pairs. Each of these can be taken with any one of the 46 remaining cards, except with those two which are of the same denomination, or with 44 in all, without forming a triplet. Each of these combinations can be taken with each of the 78 pairs, giving a two-pair hand, only it is obvious that each two-pair hand will be given twice by this arrangement. Thus the total number of two-pair hands is half of 78 times 72 times 44, or there are 123,552 such hands in all.

Next as to simple pairs. We get, as before, 78 different pairs. Each of these can be taken with any set of three formed out of the 48 cards left when the other 2 of the same denomination have been removed, except the 72 times 44 (that is 3,168) pairs indicated in dealing with the last case, and the 48 triplets which can be formed out of these same 48 cards, or 3,216 sets in all. Now the total number of sets of three cards which can be formed out of 48 is given by multi-

plying 48 by 47 by 46, and dividing by the product of the numbers 1, 2, and 3. It is found to be 17,296. We diminish this by 3,216, getting 14,082, and find that there are in all 78 times 14,082 or 1,098,240.

The hands which remain are those which are to be estimated by the highest card in them; and their number will of course be obtained by subtracting the sum of the numbers already obtained from the total number of possible hands. We thus obtain the number 1,302,540.

Thus of the four best classes of hands, there are the following numbers :

Of flush sequences there may be	40
“ four	624
“ full hands	3,744
“ common flushes	5,108
“ common sequences	10,200.
“ triplets	54,912
“ two pairs	123,552
“ pairs	1,098,240
“ other hands	1,302,540

Total number of possible hands . 2,598,960

It will be seen that those who devised the rules for poker play set the different hands in very proper order. It is fitting, for instance, that as

there are only 40 possible flush sequence hands out of a total number of 2,598,960 hands, while there are 624 "four" hands, the flush sequences should come first, and so with the rest. It is noteworthy, however, that when sequences were not counted, as was the rule in former times, there was one hand absolutely unique and unconquerable. The holder of four aces then wagered on a certainty, for no one else could hold that hand. At present there is no absolutely sure winning hand. The hold of ace, king, queen, knave, ten, flush *may* (though it is of course exceedingly unlikely) be met by the holder of the same cards, flush, in another suit. Or when we remember that at whist it *has* happened that the deal divided the four suits among the four players, to each a complete suit, we see that four players at poker *might* each receive a flush sequence headed by the ace. Thus the use of sequences has saved poker players from the possible risk of having either to stand out or wager on a certainty, which last would of course be very painful to the feelings of a professional gambler.

We might subdivide the hands above classified into a much longer array, beginning thus : 4 flush sequences headed by ace ; 4 headed by king, and so on down to 4 headed by five ; 48 possible four-aces hands ; 48 four-kings hands ; and so on down to 48 four-twos hands ; 24 possi-

ble "fulls" of 3 aces and 2 kings ; as many of 3 aces and 2 queens ; and so on down to 24 "fulls" of 3 twos and 2 threes, and so on. Any one who cares to do this can, by drawing the line at any hand, ascertain at once the number of hands above and not above that hand in value; and thus determine the chance that any hand taken at random is above or below that particular hand in value. The comparatively simple table above only shows how many hands there are above or not above pairs, triplets, and the like. But the more complete series could be very easily formed.

We note from the above table that more than half the possible poker hands are below pairs in value. So that Clay was right enough in wagering on an ace-high hand, seeing that there are more hands which will not beat it (supposing the highest next card a king, at any rate) than there are hands that will ; but he was quite wrong in calling on such a hand, even against a single opponent.

The effect of increase in the number of hands can also readily be determined. Many, even among gamblers, know so little of the doctrine of chances as not to be aware of, still less to be able to measure the effect of, the presence of a great number of other contestants. Yet it is easy to illustrate the matter.

Thus, suppose a player casts a die single

against one other. If the first has cast four, the odds are in favor of his not being beaten; for there are only two casts which *will* beat him and four which will not. The chance that he will not be beaten by a single opponent is thus $\frac{4}{6}$ or $\frac{2}{3}$. If there is another opponent, the chance that he individually will not cast better than 4 is also $\frac{2}{3}$. But the chance that neither will throw better than 4 is obtained by multiplying $\frac{2}{3}$ by $\frac{2}{3}$. It is therefore $\frac{4}{9}$; or the odds are 5 to 4 in favor of one or other beating the cast of the first thrower. If there are three others, in like manner the chance that not one of the three will throw better than 4 is obtained by multiplying $\frac{2}{3}$ by $\frac{2}{3}$ by $\frac{2}{3}$. It is, therefore, $\frac{8}{27}$; or the odds are 19 to 8 in favor of the first thrower's cast of four being beaten. And so with every increase in the number of other throwers, the chance of the first thrower's cast being beaten is increased. So that if the first thrower casts 4, and is offered his share of the stakes before the next throw is made, the offer is a bad one if there is but one opponent, a good one if there are two, and a very good one if there are more than two.

In like manner, the same hand which it would be safe to stand on (as a rule) at poker against two or three opponents may be a very unsafe hand to stand on against five or six.

Then the player has to consider the pretty chance-problems involved in drawing.

Suppose, for instance, your original hand contains a pair—the other three cards being all unlike; should you stand out? or should you draw? (to purchase right to which you must stand in); or should you stand in without drawing? Again, if you draw, how many of the three loose cards should you throw out? and what are your chances of improving your hand?

Here you have to consider first whether you will stand in, which depends not on the value of your pair only, but also on the chance that your hand will be improved by drawing. Having decided to stand in, remember that discarding three tells the rest of the company that in all probability you are drawing to improve a pair hand; and at poker, telling anything helps the enemy. If one of your loose cards is an ace, you do well to discard only the other two; for this looks like drawing to a triplet, and you may chance to draw a pair to your ace. But usually you have so much better chance of improving your hand by drawing three, that it is, as a rule, better to do this.

Drawing to a triplet is usually good policy. "Your mathematical expectation of improvement is slight," says one work on the subject, "being 1 to 23 of a fourth card" (it should be

the fourth card) “of the same denomination, and 2 to 23 of another pair of denomination different from the triplet,” a remark suggesting the comment that to obtain a pair of the same denomination as the triplet would require play something like what we hear of in old Mississippi stories, where a “straight flush” would be met by a very full pair of hands, to wit, five in one hand and a revolver in the other ! The total expectation of improvement is 1 to 8 ; but then see what an impression you make by a draw which means a good hand. Then, too, you may suggest a yet better hand, without much impairing your chance of improvement, by drawing one card only. This gives you one chance in 47 of making fours, and one in 16 of picking up one of the three cards of the same denomination as the odd cards you retain. This is a chance of one in 12.

“Draws to straights and flushes are usually dearly purchased,” says our oracle ; “always so at a small table. Their value increases directly as the number of players.” (The word “directly” is here incorrectly used ; the value increases as the number of players, but not *directly* as the number.) Of course in drawing to a two-ended straight—that is, one which does not begin or end with an ace—the chance of success is represented by 8 in 47, for there are 47 cards outside your

original hand, of which only eight are good to complete the straight. For a one-end straight the chance is but 4 in 47. With a small chance, too, of improving your hand, you are trying for a hand better than you want in any but a large company. "If you play in a large party," says one authority, "say seven or eight, and find occasion to draw for a straight against six players, do so by all means, even if you split aces." The advice is sound. Under the circumstances you need a better hand than ace-pair to give you your fair sixth share of the chances.

As to flushes your chances are better, when you have already four of a suit. You discard one, and out of the remaining 47 cards any one of nine will make your flush for you. Your chance is 1 in $5\frac{2}{3}$. In dealing with this point our oracle goes altogether wrong, and adopts a principle so inconsistent with the doctrine of probabilities as to show that, though he knows much more than Steinmetz, he still labors under somewhat similar illusions. "Theoretically," says he, "the result just obtained is absolutely true; but I have experimented with six hands through a succession of 500 deals, and filled only 83 flushes in the 500, equal to one in six and one-twentieth draws. Of course I am not prepared to say that this would be the average

.....
in many thousand deals ; theoretically it is an untrue result ; but I here suggest a *possible* explanation of what I confess is to me a mystery.” Then he expounds the very matter on which we touched above. “In casting dice,” he says, “*theoretically*, any given throw has no influence upon the next throw, and is not influenced by the previous throw. Yet if you throw a die and it turns up six, while the chances are *theoretically* one to six ” (one in six it should be) “ that the next throw will produce a six because the previous throw of six lies absolutely in the past, yet you may safely bet something more than the usual odds against it. Then suppose the second throw turns up a six, that throw also now lies in the past, and cannot be proved to have an influence upon throw number three, which you are preparing to make. If any *material* influence is suspected, you may change the box and die ; and you may now bet twice the usual odds against the six. Why? Because you know by experience that it is extremely difficult to throw six three times in succession, even if you do not know the precise odds against it. Granted, certain odds against throwing six twice in succession, etc., yet at any given moment when the player shakes the box in which is a six-faced die, he has one chance in six of throwing a six ; and yet if he has just thrown sixes twice, you

may bet twelve to one that he will not throw a six in that particular cast." If I did not hold gambling to be near akin to swindling, and could find but a few hundred who held this doctrine, how much money might I not gain by accepting any number of wagers of this wise sort !

The fact is, the mistake here is just the ridiculous mistake which Steinmetz called "the maturity of the chances" over again. It is a mistake which has misled to their ruin many thousands of gamblers, who might have escaped the evil influence of that other equally foolish mistake about being lucky or unlucky, in the vein or out of it. Steinmetz puts the matter thus : "In a game of chance, the oftener the same combination has occurred in succession; the nearer are we to the certainty that it will not recur at the next cast or turn-up : this is the most elementary of the theories on probabilities ; it is termed the maturity of the chances." The real fact being that this is not a theory of probabilities at all, but disproved by the theory of probabilities, and disproved, whenever it has been put to the test, by facts.

Take the case considered in "The Complete Poker Player," and note the evidence on the strength of which the author of that work rejects the theory in favor of a practical common-sense notion (as he thinks), which is, in reality,

nonsense. You may expect 9 successful draws to a flush in 47 hands ; therefore in the 500 deals he experimented upon, he might have expected 95 or 96 ; and he only obtained 83. Now 500 trials are far too few to test such a matter as this. You can hardly test even the tossing of a coin properly by fewer than a thousand trials ; and in that case there are but 2 possible events. Here there are 47, of which 9 are favorable. It is the failure to recognize this which led the Astronomer Royal for Scotland to recognize something mystical and significant in the preponderance of threes and the deficiency of sevens among the digits representing the proportion of the circumference to the diameter of a circle. In casting a coin a great number of times we do not find that the occurrence of a great number of successive heads or tails in any way affects the average proportion of heads or tails coming next after the series. Thus I have before me the record of a series of 16,317 tossings, in which the number of sequences of tails (only) were rendered ; and I find that after 271 cases, in which tails had been tossed 5 times in succession, the next tossing gave in 132 cases heads, and in 139 cases tails. Among the 16,317 tossings, two cases occurred in which tail was tossed 15 times in succession, which, as it happens, is *more* than theory would regard as probable.

Here, however, I must draw these notes to a close. I have been already led on farther than I had intended to go. I shall note only one other of the doctrines (mostly sound enough theoretically) laid down in "The Complete Poker Player." "Players sometimes," he says, "act on the strange principle that if they are in bad luck it is well to try the bold experiments usually regarded as bad play—as two negatives in algebra make a positive, so they think that bad play and bad luck united will win." On this our author makes the significant comment, "a slight degree of intoxication aids to perfect this intellectual deduction." Poker playing generally, as a process for making money more quickly, is much improved and enlivened by a slight degree of intoxication.

STRAIGHT POKER.

"Take it up straight."

Winter's Tale. Act II., Scene 3d.

The fifty-two cards are used, and the rule of the game the same as in ordinary poker, with these exceptions. Deal passes to the person winning. Before playing everybody puts up a chip. You can pass and come in again at your pleasure. The original cards are what you play with, and you do not draw. When nobody

enters, the player to the left of the dealer makes a new round of cards. Bucks are often used for convenience, the elder hand putting in as many chips as there are players.

STUD POKER.

"Shall's have a play of this?"

Cymbeline. Act V., Scene 5th.

In dealing, five cards are given, as in poker. The first card is placed face down, the others with their faces up. Then a card or cards are drawn, which are not exposed. The raising and all else is as in usual poker.

WHISKY POKER.

"I cannot do't without counters."

Winter's Tale. Act IV., Scene 2d.

This game begins by each player putting a chip in the pool. Hands as in poker are dealt, with one extra hand, placed face downward on the table. This hand is called the widow. The elder hand has the choice of passing, or taking the five cards of the widow. If he passes, the hand after him has the privilege. If the widow is taken, the player puts face up on the table the hand he has originally held, and from this, in rotation, the other hands take a card or the cards they want, replacing in the widow the cards they have taken from their own hands. When

one player is satisfied with his hand, he intimates that he will close the game. Those after him and up to him are still entitled to take or exchange cards, until his place is reached. Then there is a show of hands, but no betting. The best hand wins. If the first player has a good hand, and decides to close the game, the widow may still be used or exchanged with the widow made as before described.

MISTIGRIS.

"There lies a cooling card."

Henry VI., Part I. Act V., Scene 3d.

The joker is used. The joker makes fifty-three cards in the pack. The mistigris, in a player's hand, entitles him to increase the value of his hand. If he has a pair, holding the mistigris makes them threes. With threes, the mistigris makes them fours. With two pairs, it converts the hand into a full. It has all latitude, makes straights, flushes, etc., etc. Sometimes its power is diminished of course by agreement, as in a full, increasing only the lower pair. All else is as in regular poker.

TIGER.

"The Hyrcan tiger."

Macbeth. Act III., Scene 4th.

This is a dreadful innovation, but as it is occasionally played we give it a place in this

volume. The tiger in a hand of poker is the very lowest combination of cards which can be held. Five cards beginning with a seven and ending with a deuce is a tiger. Thus seven, six, five, four, and deuce, and nothing else, is a tiger. There must be no pair in it. It can be drawn for. It is supposed to be better than a straight, and not as good as a flush. A tiger then beats threes.

ANECDOTES ON POKER.

ANECDOTES ON POKER.

SENATORIAL POKER STORIES.

*"In winter's tedious nights, sit by the fire
With good old folks; and let them tell thee tales."*

Richard II. Act V., Scene 1st.

THERE was a famous little poker club made up of Senators of the United States, which met several times a week in gorgeously furnished private rooms at the hostelry of my friend John Chamberlin the gastronome, in Washington. At a seance in that convivial and charming company I heard these anecdotes.

A TERRIBLE BLUFF.

"A famous Chicago player named Dr. Powell was sitting in a game with Senator Tom Bowen of Colorado. One of the party said Senator Bowen was a terrible bluffer, and thought no more of losing \$100,000 than the ordinary man would \$100. In those days a bluff meant a good deal, too. Men used to go down into their pockets, and if you couldn't cover the money on the

table the other fellow took the stuff. We had made a jack-pot, and there was \$2000 on the table. Bowen had two pairs, jacks up, and he passed. That was a trick of his. Powell had a pair of kings, and he opened the pot for \$50. I had three sixes, and I stood the \$50 and made it \$100 better. The other people dropped out until it came to Bowen, who raised it \$500, making it cost \$650 to draw cards. Powell and I just stayed, Bowen stood pat, Dr. Powell drew three, and I drew two. Powell caught a pair of fives to his kings and I captured my fourth six. Say, may be I wasn't shaking, for I knew Bowen was in for a big bluff. Powell seemed afraid and silently laid in \$20. I raised him \$500 and Bowen went \$1000 better than me. Dr. Powell took out his check-book and said: 'I suppose you will not object to my check?'

"We murmured 'no,' and he called the \$1500. I then got out my check-book and raised it \$1000.

"Bowen quietly said: 'If I thought you had lots of money I would raise this pot enough to make it interesting. As it is, I'll just tilt her \$5000.'

"Powell laid down his cards without a word. It took me ten minutes to decide whether to call or raise; but I was afraid if I raised he would jump onto me for more than I could produce and thus capture the pot. So I said, 'I'll

call that.' Bowen calmly threw his hand into the deck, and I left town loaded down with money."

THE ONE-EYED STRANGER.

The best of these Senatorial poker stories, however, is this, which I heard from Senator Jones of Nevada: "One night at the leading saloon of a little town in my State a party of half a dozen were playing poker. Among the players was a very nice young fellow, a graduate of Yale College, and a man who had been quite successful at mining, and had at the same time made himself popular with his fellows. Another member of the party was a one-eyed stranger, and the rest was made up of other honest miners about the camp. The play went on from early in the evening until about midnight, and all this time the one-eyed man seemed to get all the good hands. Several times the college graduate thought he saw that the man was cheating, but he did not appear to notice it. At midnight the college graduate rose up and quietly said: 'Gentlemen, we are all tired playing, and some of us are about broke. I propose now that we take a recess and have some oysters and champagne. After we are through we will throw away these cards, get a new deck, and see if our luck don't change. We will set out to play a square game,

and' (here he looked hard at the one-eyed stranger, as he put his hand at his revolver at his belt) 'the first man we catch cheating we will shoot out his other eye.' Well, the motion was carried, the oysters were eaten, and the luck did change. The one-eyed man lost every cent of his winnings, and as daylight broke through the dirty panes of the saloon windows he arose, declaring himself dead broke."

"LET HER BURN; THE POT IS MINE."

Years ago Senator Vest, when a young man, occasionally indulged in the fascinating game called draw poker, a game which we know is thoroughly understood in all its details in Clinton County, more especially Lathrop. Well, once on a time Vest had tried a case in a little county seat and received a large fee for clearing his man. So much money in the hands of the young lawyer was as tempting to the denizens as a cool watermelon to a hungry nigger. The result was a game of poker was gotten up. The boys intended to fleece Vest, and of course stocked the cards. They had no place to play in but a little shed that had no floor but some fresh dry wheat straw. It was a five-handed game, and a dry-goods box served as a table. It happened to be a jack-pot, and Vest opened it on three queens.

The cards being fixed, the other fellows had better hands and of course raised before the draw. Vest stood the raise and drew two cards. As luck would have it he got the other queen. The betting commenced and grew exceedingly warm. They would raise the young lawyer and he would see them and go a little better. An outsider, who stood in with the gang, looked over Vest's shoulder and saw what a formidable hand he had. He held up four fingers, shook his head, and in other ways tried to warn his friends. But to no purpose. He saw that Vest would break the crowd, so he lit a match and set the straw floor on fire and told them to run for dear life. That cool head which serves him so well now in the great debates of the Senate, and which never lets him become rattled, did not desert him then. With one hand he raked in the boodle, with the other he exhibited his lovely queens, and as he went out of the door with his coat-tail on fire, he said : " Let her burn ; the pot is mine." An hour or two afterward he sat in the hotel surrounded by a crowd of friends. He told them that the manner in which they weighed hogs in Arkansas was to tie two boxes on the ends of a pole and balance it across a rail fence. The hog was placed in one box and the other one was filled with rocks until they balanced. The weight of the hog was ascertained by guessing

at the weight of the rocks. Vest then lazily closed his near eye and slowly elevated the brow of the off one, a comical facial expression so peculiar to himself, and remarked that he was of the opinion that some people in that town knew as little about playing poker as the people of Arkansas did about weighing hogs. The crowd all laughed but the shed-burners, and they put on a sickly grin and went out and smiled.

"THAT TYPEWRITER."

Not very long ago Senator, then Mr. Pettigrew, was staying at a small town in Dakota, where he knew two or three men whose piles were nearly as big as his own. Some one suggested a quiet game of draw. There being nothing else to do Pettigrew was willing, and they adjourned to a private room in the hotel, where a pretty stiff game was soon in progress. After playing some time a jack-pot became rather fat. Pettigrew hesitated at first, but concluded to come in, and drew four cards.

The man who opened the pot bet \$50, and Pettigrew raised the same amount. The third player dropped out, as the man who opened had not drawn any cards. It being then the turn of the opener, he raised another \$50, which Pettigrew doubled. This sort of thing went on

for some little time, until the fellow who opened the pot began to get uneasy.

“How many cards did you draw, Pettigrew?” he asked.

“Four,” was the laconic response.

“Well, you are betting pretty lively on a four-card draw.”

Pettigrew said nothing, but suggested that they raise the limit to \$100. The other fellow began to get nervous, but thought his opponent could not possibly have a better hand than his own, and raised another \$50. Pettigrew came right back at him without a smile, and the other fellow in desperation called. Pettigrew laid down his hand — ace, king, queen, jack, and ten-spot of clubs.

“Great Scott!” was the chorus.

“Guess that’s my pot,” said Pettigrew.

“What in thunder did you draw to?” asked his companion.

“That typewriter,” said Pettigrew, indicating the modest little queen of clubs. The remarks of the players were very lurid as Pettigrew smiled blandly and shuffled the cards.

“What did you open it on?” asked he at last.

“Three kings and a pair of aces, though I don’t know that it is any of your business.”

That broke up the game. The Senatorial players here heard this story of Pettigrew’s luck

and are fighting shy of him. They are pretty good poker players themselves, but they are so much afraid of the Dakota man's proverbial luck that he has not yet been invited into a game. He is watching his chance, however, and sooner or later will get into the statesmen's game.

PLAYING FOR GREAT STAKES.

A SQUAW.

Jerking Bill's large pile of blue chips had dwindled down to the bare possibility of an ante on the evening following a mountain-sheep hunt, when, it being that gentleman's deal, he suggested a freeze-out. The others assented, and in less than an hour every chip on the table had gravitated into the pile in front of the famous broncho-jaw breaker. Doc looked rather blue over his losses, and a veteran cow-puncher called "Parson Jack," on account of his unexampled capacity for the most lurid style of profanity, swore till he was black in the face. Fortunately, it was not until he had cooled down that he noticed that Jerking Bill still wore his "chaps."

"What ye got them chaps on fer, Bill?" he demanded, suspiciously. "Come, Doc, le's shake him out of 'em."

Jerking Bill's six-shooter came out with its old-time fluency.

"No ye don't," he said, with a grin ; "but, seein' it was a friendly game, you can have your money back," and he cheerfully divided his winnings *pro rata* among the players. Then he took off his huge cowhide leggins, and with them fell to the floor as elegant an assortment of aces, kings, queens, and jacks as one would wish to see.

"That's why I wore my chaps," said Bill ; "and that reminds me of a little game I was steered against one time up on the Chugwater."

"The stakes in this game," began Jerking Bill, "was the handsomest young squaw in the country. It was in '63, when ranching was pretty ticklish business unless you stood in with the Indians. The quickest and surest way to do this was to marry into the tribe. In this way you were sure to be eaten half out of house and home by several hundred of your wife's relations, but your scalp was safe and the redskins wouldn't drive your stock off. As a general thing a Pi-Ute squaw ain't noted for her beauty, and in the fall of '63 the stock had melted away before the demand until what was left was about the scraggiest lot you can imagine. All but See-Face-in-the-Water ; she was young and a very good-looking squaw, as squaws go. She wouldn't create

much excitement hereabout now, but to us poor fellows who hadn't seen a white woman for three or four years she was a ravishing beauty.

“ See-Face-in-the-Water's father was a tough old buck, who wasn't such a fool that he didn't realize the fact that his daughter comprised the bulk of his assets. Every unmarried ranchman in the country was after the girl, but the old buck, who went by the name of Eat-Thunder, would listen to no proposals except those made by Poker Jack, Seven-Up Andy, and your humble servant. We all had large ranches and good-sized herds, and Eat-Thunder sized us up as about the style of son-in-law he was pinin' for. Our ranches joined, and the old chap wanted us to organize a stock company and marry the girl on shares. We couldn't agree to this, so Jack suggested a game of poker, See-Face-in-the-Water to be the stakes. Each of us was to take \$10 worth of chips, and the game was to last until one of us had cleaned out the other two, the winner to have the squaw.

“ The game took place at Jack's cabin. See-Face-in-the-Water sat on a pile of buffalo robes in a corner, and about thirty bucks (we'd taught the whole gang the game) looked on very much excited. To make sure that Poker Jack didn't ring in any of his under-the-table business on us, Andy and I proposed that a buffalo robe turned

bottom up on the floor should be the table, and that the three players should sit on three corners while Eat-Thunder sat on the other to see fair play. Jack had been riding on the range all day and still wore his chaps. We told him he'd better take 'em off, but he said as he'd got several miles to ride it wouldn't pay to take 'em off for the few minutes it would take him to corral the game; so we didn't say anything more, but got to work.

"For more than an hour the game kept almost even, and then Jack began to pull ahead. Once started, it took about fifteen minutes to clean me out and make a very large hole in Andy's pile. About this stage of the game Andy caught three deuces, and did some very heavy bluffing. Poker Jack held a full hand. The excitement became intense. Eat-Thunder, who sat next Jack, had so far been a strictly impartial witness of the game. Now he was strangely agitated, and leaned over on his elbow partly behind Jack, and seemed to be feeling in his belt. Andy put up his last chip. Jack saw him, and was about to rake in the pot, when Eat-Thunder caught him by the wrist with his left hand and with his hunting-knife in his right ripped Jack's chaps open clear to the knee."

Here Jerking Bill paused, heaved a sigh, and silently rolled a cigarette.

“What did Eat-Thunder find?” some one inquired, Bill seeming to have forgotten that his story was unfinished.

“About the same layout I had a little while ago. Poker Jack’s chaps down half-way to his knees were lined with flushes, straights, and full hands, with now and then a small pair for the sake of variety. Poor Jack! He was a genius and deserved a better fate!”

“Why, what happened to him?”

“A very fatal kind of an accident. Eat-Thunder, enraged at the sight of such wholesale cheating upon so solemn an occasion, made just one more pass with his knife and poor Jack’s head rolled over into the lap of the Indian maid he had so nearly won. Then Eat-Thunder got up and made a speech. He warned all present to profit by the example before them and never commit the heinous offense of cheating at poker, an offense which, if it became general, would undermine the bulwarks of society and yield the bitter fruit of disunion, anarchy, and rebellion. In order to make the lesson still more impressive, Eat-Thunder subsequently drove Andy and me out of the territory and confiscated our property.”

Jerking Bill was so overcome by the memories his story had revived that he said not another word, but presently sought the seclusion of his blankets.

CAPTAIN BILLY CONNER'S STORY.

Captain Billy Conner told me this story :
“A magnificent Mississippi River steamer was on her way to New Orleans with a cabin full of passengers going to Mardi Gras. The usual brass band that played stirring airs at each town landing was aboard. In the cabin were passengers from all points along the river, and some from distant cities. Of course there was poker playing in the social hall in the gentlemen's cabin, which was in the front part of the steamer.

“When the boat landed at Natchez a big game was in full blast. A stranger, tall, handsome, and well dressed, came aboard. He had an honest, open countenance, and won confidence the minute any one looked at him. After he had registered at the clerk's desk and been assigned to a stateroom, he lit a cigar and slowly sauntered around. When he came to the table where the big game of poker was being played, he sat down behind one of the players. Now, it happened that the man he sat behind was not a professional gambler, but his opponent across the table was a blackleg of the most expert and cunning kind. The non-professional, though, had plenty of money and bet freely. The handsome stranger sat quietly behind the non-professional and gave pointers to the gambler opposite. He

did it in such a quick and telegraphic way that no one saw or even suspected him. The gambler, though, saw and understood his signs thoroughly. Finally the non-professional player began to lose. If he had a good hand the gambler would either pass out or bet and win. The stakes were raised and several thousand dollars were on the table in one pot. After the non-professional had dealt the cards he picked up his hand and found four hearts and a club. The antes and raises were too high to go out, and so he drew one card to a flush and the gambler drew four cards to a king high. The latter didn't catch a pair and the flush was not made. In an instant the tall stranger communicated the fact to the gambler that his opponent had a bobtail flush and only queen high. Betting began in a bluffy kind of way by the gambler putting up a cool \$1000. The non-professional saw it and went \$2000 better. They kept raising each other until \$10,000 was up, when the gambler was called. He took in the money with a king high, and the game came to an end.

“The next morning the tall, handsome stranger was strolling on the hurricane deck, when he was met by the gambler, who requested the pleasure of meeting him alone in his (the gambler's) stateroom. When they arrived there the gambler carefully bolted the door and said : ‘Now,

pard, I wish to divide with you. Here are \$5000, half of our winnings.' The tall stranger drew back indignantly and replied: 'I do not understand you. What do you owe me \$5000 for?' Then the gambler explained that he always divided with other professionals who gave away the hands of gentlemen at the card table. Without being embarrassed in the least, the stranger said: 'I just gave you pointers because I happened to sit behind that man. If I had been behind you I would have given your hand away to the other fellow. That is the way I do; I don't want any money.' With that remark he walked out of the stateroom. I defy any one to match a phase of character similar to that of the handsome stranger. He got off at New Orleans, and lives in New York to-day."

HERRMANN'S POKER STORY.

I heard Herrmann, the magician, tell this story once: "I remember one night, not a thousand years ago, that, in order to amuse a few friends, I sat down to a quiet little game of poker. You see, it was this way: I met the friends, and was introduced to an innocent-looking youth of the dude persuasion, whose face was as vacant in expression as a pound of putty. This youth

had been bragging of his powers as a poker player, and had made the others so tired that they whispered me to take the conceit out of him for the fun there was in it. I was ready, and we sat down."

"In Philadelphia?"

"Bless you, no. They don't play poker in Philadelphia. This was in ——. Well, when we began the game I allowed the youngster to win in order to get him interested, and, the better to enjoy the circus, the others dropped out and my victim and I had the table to ourselves. Of course, I was to give him back whatever I won from him—that was understood. We didn't play with chips, as we had none, but made the game a quarter ante and a dollar limit, so that we could use the money without making any awkward change. Every time my callow friend won a pot he put the silver and bills in his pocket and would chip in the stuff as he needed it. After he had won a respectable pile I began to get my work in, and by handling and dealing the cards in my own peculiar way I soon had his pile in a fair way to innocuous desuetude. Occasionally I would let him win, just to keep the fun up, and I don't know but what I enjoyed my opponent's innocence as much as did my friends. But all things must have an end. Finally I cleaned him out, much to his surprise,

and ordered a bottle. My friends couldn't keep it in any longer.

“‘I say, old man,’ said one, ‘do you know who you’ve been playin’ with?’”

“‘Yes,’ replied my victim calmly; ‘Herrmann, the magician, and he’s a good player.’”

“‘This was somewhat of a surprise all round. But I laughed and handed him back the money I had won. He wouldn’t take it. No, sir. Said I had won it; had he won mine he would have kept it, and under no consideration would he take it back. That was not his way of playing poker. It was no use for me to protest, to tell him that I had deliberately robbed him. He was sorry that he had got in with a man who didn’t play a square game, but that it was his lookout. He ought to have seen that he was being fleeced, but as he had been fleeced and with his eyes open, too, he was not the man to squeal. I tell you, I felt mean. I didn’t think it half so funny then as I did before. But all I could do or say made no impression on my victim, and with a dignified bow he left us.’”

“‘All I can do,’ I said to one of my friends, ‘will be to give this money to some charitable institution.’”

“‘Then I gave the waiter one of the bills I had won to pay for the wine. He came back with it, and the information that it was a counterfeit.’”

Yes, sir. That guileless youth had won my good money and rung in over a hundred dollars' worth of paper on me that wasn't worth a cent a pound. I'm pretty good on handling cards, but poker is a mighty uncertain game—mighty uncertain."

WINNING A WIFE.

I heard this anecdote of Sylvester Shively, who died of apoplexy at Scranton, Pennsylvania, not long ago. He was born in Wilkesbarre fifty years ago and was a college-bred man. It is thought by old gamblers in New York that he has left nearly \$500,000. He won his wife by a game of poker on the Mississippi in the summer of 1860. It was on the River Queen, and the game had been going on for some time, and the stakes ran into the thousands, for there was no limit in those days. One of the players, after dropping his last dollar, drew his chair back from the table, and going to the side of the boat whipped out his deringer and put it to his head. But he was not quick enough, for Shively had him in his grasp before he could fire, and he led the man into the cabin. There the stranger introduced Shively to his daughter, a beautiful girl of twenty. They say it was love at first sight. Shively restored the man's fortune he had won, married the daughter, and promised

to give up gambling forever. He settled down in Scranton and was living like a gentleman when he was called to Harrisburg on business during a session of the Legislature. He sat into a game there and won \$26,000. Shively was a member of the famous "Bucktail," a Pennsylvania regiment that enlisted in 1861.

A SHARPER'S DICTA.

I once heard of a poker sharp laying down the following rules :

"When you are a considerable winner in the game, keep continually looking at your watch, if you have any ; if not, keep asking what time it is, stating that your wife is dying, or anything that will produce the impression that you must go after that hand. After you have said that fifteen or twenty times in half as many minutes, if some one of the players don't beg of you to get out of the game, then get up and apologize for ever having a wife, etc. N. B.—This rule need not be followed when you are a considerable loser.

"If you are a big, strong man, be a poker player by all means ; because, in case you are beaten by a smaller and more intellectual gentleman, you can bully him and lie him out of the pool, or threaten to whip him, and grab the pot.

“Never ante up till some one tells you to, and then say that you have, and stick to it, which will generally persuade some one else to ‘come in’ twice. This rule, though an excellent one, must be followed with discretion.

“Toward the end of the evening it is always better to ‘owe’ up your ante ‘for a minute’ than to ‘put’ up, as the winner of the pot frequently forgets to charge up the debt, and none of the other players will remind him, as they may wish to do the same thing.”

POKER McCool,

There was once a famous Mississippi River man named Poker McCool. “He was what we called in those days a ‘high roller’—that is, he would not only play for heavy stakes, but would have gambled the last of his possessions, even had it been a block of brick buildings, on what he thought would be the top hand. Where McCool came from to the river, as well as whither he went upon leaving it, nobody knew. But while he was there he made a name and a fortune which were the envy of many a less successful sporting man. His penchant for and success at draw poker won for him the pseudonym of ‘Poker McCool.’ and I venture to say if one were to take a trip down the river to-

day he would find a small army of ante-rebellion slaves who were either won or lost at poker by McCool.

“ McCool spent much of his time at New Orleans, and he became a conspicuous equestrian figure there in time. He owned a big black stallion, for which he paid \$1000, and when he was astride of the animal he was an attractive object—he and the horse. He thought much of the animal and money could not have touched him. Well, on the afternoon I am speaking about McCool got into a poker game (good old draw poker it was) with a wealthy planter named Brady. Neither McCool nor Brady belonged to a temperance organization, and a feature of the game was the frequent turning of the ‘low card’ for a drink. It was about sundown when the deal began which ended the game and left McCool afoot and bankrupt.

“ The deal was Brady’s, and the first card had been given to each of them when McCool wanted a card turned for another round of drinks. Brady turned it, and a four-spot fell to each. With a recklessness and gambling informality which had characterized the game throughout, McCool threw a large sum of money on the table and Brady called it. It seemed to be merely a bet before the draw, and the players tacitly understood in what manner it would be

won or lost. McCool called for another card to be turned and it was done. Each got a five-spot. McCool made another addition to the pot, which Brady covered, and a third card was turned. Each got a six. Up to this time the players had intended that, after deciding the question of drinks the draw should be proceeded with; but now the game took another turn, and it was decided to settle the hands without drawing. The fifth card was accordingly turned, and it was a deuce. There was an immense pile in the pot, and the interest among the crowd, which was packed around the table, was so intense and the silence so deep that the ticking of the tall clock behind the bar sounded like a hammer striking on an anvil. Both men sat deeply absorbed in study. McCool's buried card was a six-spot, and he was certain enough that his pair had Brady beaten. Brady's buried card was a tray, and he had a straight and a sure thing. His credit, sitting behind that hand, was unlimited, and he was prepared to play it out.

“The scene at this time was the most impressive that I believe I ever witnessed. I never saw an aggregation of men so thoroughly impressed with the fact that a tremendous stake hung in the balance. The betting proceeded slowly but heavily, until finally McCool had all his earthly possessions represented in the stake

on the table except two objects. One of these was his stallion, who stood champing his bit on the street outside ; the other was his old negro slave, who stood holding the horse. Finally McCool ordered the negro to be brought in, and Brady deposited \$2000 against him, at the same time raising McCool \$5000.

“After some moments of cool study McCool told Brady that all he owned was on the table with the exception of his horse. He was willing to put him up against the last bet that Brady had made. The proposition was accepted and McCool ordered the horse to be led in, and he was. The interest which I have described as attending the game before now seemed intensified, if that were possible, and the picture there presented, with the faithful old slave standing by his master’s chair, the agony of the suspense which he was undergoing plainly depicted upon his face, the magnificent horse, who seemed all but conscious of the wealth at stake, and lastly the players and spectators, was one never to be forgotten. When the betting was at last over and nothing was lacking to decide the game but the appearance of the two buried cards, McCool called for a glass of liquor. It was not until he had emptied this that he asked to see his opponent’s card.

“When it was shown down he silently got up

from the table and walked through the crowd, which parted for his passage, out into the street. He never sat in a game that drew a crowd again, and it was but a few months from that time when he disappeared permanently from the river. He was the first man to lose big money at 'studhorse poker,' and he has had my respectful sympathy ever since."

FAMOUS POKER CHIPS.

"The most beautiful set of poker chips I ever heard of was made for the famous John Morrissey, Congressman and State Senator. Before Morrissey started his famous Saratoga gambling house he had a place on Barclay Street in New York. While there a party of Western sports called on Morrissey and during the week managed to win about \$30,000 from him.

"As they had been treated very elaborately and won so much they determined to give Morrissey some token of their distinguished consideration. After some discussion it was decided to have made the finest 'rack' of poker chips that money could buy. The chips now in Washington were the result of that determination. There were 1000 chips, with a few odd ones to make up for any that might be lost or broken. Upon each chip is a carving made by hand. On the

white ones is a small figure without significance; on the others are carved the figures '5' and '25' in a center of red and yellow. Each chip is carved by hand and from the finest 'heart' ivory that could be found in the city of New York. The total cost of the set was over \$2000, or \$2 apiece.

“When they were given to Morrissey they were polished to the highest degree and shone and glistened in the light as though they were silver. The case which holds them is of rosewood, finely polished, and in the top is set a tiger couchant of polished brass, two enormous cat's eyes being sunk in the head and giving it a peculiarly animated appearance. Now, because the chips were given to him by winners, Morrissey thought it would be bad luck to use them in the same place, and in consequence they were not used until after Morrissey started his place in Saratoga.

“Then the superstition worked in accordance with the gambler's idea, and the first time they were used in a heavy game Morrissey lost over \$50,000. Then he put them on exhibition and they were stolen within ten days. Some months afterward they were recognized in a Bowery pawn-shop, where the thief had pawned them for \$75. Morrissey redeemed them, and shortly afterward they were stolen again. A young

Englishman who was doing the country bought them from the thief and carried them to Chicago. After the habit of young Englishmen, the tourist in question became hard up and sold them to the present owner, who brought them to Washington, where they have been for two years, and have been played with by some of the heaviest poker players in the capital. I was shown them the other day, and they bear no more signs of use than if they had been bought yesterday."

HOW A GENERAL WON A POT.

"I heard a racy adventure of General Forrest, the noted Southern cavalry commander during the war of the rebellion. He returned to Memphis after the surrender with his wife, and with only a single \$10 bill in his pocket. Mrs. Forrest was a lady of the most quiet, amiable Christian virtues, and the only person, by the way, who had any control of the 'wizard of the saddle' while in a passion. One touch of her gentle hand, one soft, tender word would calm his most tempestuous mood in a moment.

"Sitting alone together the night of their return to Memphis, General Forrest said: 'Mary, I know you are a strict church member and have always opposed cards. But this \$10 bill is all there is on earth between us and the poorhouse.

.....
Won't you consent to my going out to-night and hunting up a game of draw? And won't you pray that I may win while I am out?'

"In vain the good woman protested. It was a sin in the sight of God, she said, and sin could not finally prosper. He went, found the party he wanted, and began the game. The cards ran his way from the first, and his winnings grew so large that he set his beaver on the floor beside him and used it as a depository. About two o'clock in the morning he lifted his tile, bent his head down and placed the hat carefully on it, retaining the money inside. Reaching home he emptied his winnings into Mrs. Forrest's lap, saying: 'Mary, count it.' She found that he had upward of \$1500—a sum which gave him a good start in life, after having lost all. 'I believe,' said he, relating the incident to some friends, 'that Mary, in spite of her objections, really prayed for me while I was gone. At any rate I found her still sitting up when I got back, and I know her prayers have many a time served me a good turn.'"

FAMOUS OLD-TIME CARD PLAYERS.

CLAY AND GALLATIN AT SEVEN-UP.

Senator Beck, of Kentucky, is one of the best story-tellers in Congress. He went to school as

a boy at a college near Ashland, the residence of Henry Clay, and he described the other night a visit which a number of the college boys once made upon the old statesman. Said he: "As Mr. Clay rose to meet us his face shone with smiles, and every boy in the party was straight-way his friend. In the course of the talk he asked us what we thought of his pictures. There were a number — some paintings and some engravings — hanging upon the walls in different parts of the room. We finally decided upon one, the picture of a woman holding a bowl of steaming mush in her hand, as the finest one in the collection. As we did so Mr. Clay laughed, and said: 'Yes, boys, I think you have picked out my best picture, and as you have done so I must tell its history. I got that picture at Ghent, and in a curious way. Albert Gallatin, John Quincy Adams, and myself were there making the treaty, and Mr. Gallatin and myself took chances in a picture raffle. My prize turned out to be that picture,' pointing to an inferior engraving on the other side of the room, 'and Gallatin got this. Now, Gallatin knew very little about art, and I did not know very much, but I could see at a glance that his picture was far better than mine, and that I should be laughed at if we took the pictures home and comparisons were made. I saw that I must get hold

of Gallatin's picture, and I said to him : " Mr. Gallatin, these two pictures were made to match each other, and the man who has one ought to have both. Now, I will tell you what I will do. I will put my picture against yours, and we will play a game of cards for them. The man who wins shall take both pictures, and you may name the game."

" ' Mr. Gallatin thought a moment, consented, and said "seven-up," ' and," continued Senator Beck, "I can hear Henry Clay's hearty laugh now and see his smile of intense merriment as he concluded : ' As soon as Gallatin said seven-up I knew I had him. He knew but little about cards, and I was one of the best seven-up players in Kentucky. The result was as I had anticipated, and I got the picture.' "

HOW CLAY WAS CHEATED AT CARDS.

"I heard a curious story of Clay while I was campaigning in the southern part of Ohio. It was told me at a little Ohio town, the name of which I do not remember now. Clay was accustomed to stop over at this town on his way to Washington, and one night while he was here he became engaged in a game of poker with several men about the hotel to pass away the time. A professional gambler got into the

party, and cheated for some time without discovery. At last he laid down three aces, when Clay had two in his hand. Clay had been accustomed to playing with gentlemen, and one of the poker party who told me the story said that his anger at this moment was terrible. He slowly drew himself out of his seat, and rose upward until he seemed about seventeen feet high. He drew his pistol, and the man made for the door. Clay did not follow him, but he expressed his indignation by walking around to his chair and shooting a hole through its center. The gambler left the town instantaneously."

MR. ADAMS' JOKE.

The President is quoted as having his favorite game. General Garfield was fond of euchre and whist, and there are a score of men now in the United States Senate who understand the most subtle intricacies of poker. Daniel Webster was a famous hand at euchre; General Scott liked nothing better than a night at the whist table; and Franklin Pierce knew how to play cards and liked them. In the days of Pierce the Presidents were more democratic than they are now. They walked about the town and paid visits to their friends in their rooms. An old stager, whose white hair was black while

President Pierce occupied the White House, gave me an illustration of this to-night. Said he : "At a dinner given by the American Commissioners after the conclusion of the treaty, Henry Clay was sitting at the seat of honor at the right of the head of the table, and immediately opposite him was sitting John Quincy Adams. Mr. Adams seldom made a joke, and when he arose and spoke as follows about Mr. Clay there was no man in the party more astonished than Clay. Said Mr. Adams : 'We have at last finished the business which called us to this convention, and I am glad of it. Not that our relations have not been pleasant, but I think it is high time that my friend Mr. Clay should depart. I think it to the interest of himself and family that he should go at once. Because, gentlemen, at the hotel at which we both stop there is a serving-maid, young, rosy, and fair to look upon. This fair girl was met by Mr. Clay this morning, just in the hall outside my room, and I distinctly heard him offer her a five-franc piece for a single kiss from her cherry lips. Like a good girl she scorned his offer, tore herself from his embracing arms, and ran down the hall.'

"The assault was so unexpected that Clay blushed to his temples, and was for a moment at a loss for a reply. As John Quincy Adams

was closing, however, he noted the well-known weakness of Mr. Adams' eyes, which at all times were full of water, and kept him constantly busy mopping up the tears. While the attention of the table of diplomats was so directed at Mr. Clay, he pulled out his handkerchief and wiped his eyes with a significant imitation of Mr. Adams' gesture. He then slowly rose and said, as he looked up and down the table, and finally fixed his wandering orbs upon Mr. Adams' face: 'What the gentleman opposite me has said is all true. It is true that the girl is very beautiful. And it is true that her lips were very tempting to me. The story of my failure to pick the cherries is also true as far as it goes, but the whole of the story has not been told. I did offer the maiden five francs for a kiss, but as I attempted to take it she sprang from my embrace and indignantly exclaimed: 'Do you think I am such a fool as to give you a kiss for five francs, when I've refused that old gentleman across the hall, who has offered me twenty with tears in his eyes?'

"The laugh was on Adams. He took the joke angrily, and for several days would not speak to Clay. Clay, however, went to him and apologized, saying that he had been dumfounded by Adams' remark, and the more so because it contained more truth than fancy."

HOW CLAY BEAT THROCKMORTON.

“Another story about Clay, so well authenticated that it comes to me almost directly from Henry Clay’s mouth, relates an adventure of his with old Throckmorton, a noted hotel-keeper at Louisville in Clay’s day. Throckmorton was one of Mr. Clay’s most intimate Kentucky friends. In their latter days the two were almost inseparable, and they often joined hands over the whist table. Throckmorton was a fine whist player, and nothing irritated him more than to have his game interrupted or spoiled by talking. Throckmorton generally beat Clay, but Clay got ahead of him at a whist party in Louisville, when he and Throckmorton were partners. The stakes were nominal—\$1 a game, I think—and as soon as the party sat down at the table Clay began to tell stories. The result was that he paid no attention to his hand, and through his blunders trick after trick was lost. Throckmorton protested from time to time, finally saying: ‘Really, Mr. Clay, for a man of your ability, education, and reputation, you are the poorest whist player I have ever known.’ The play continued the same way, and Throckmorton grew more and more angry. At last Clay said: ‘You are making more fuss by your objecting than I am by my stories. Now,’ and

here he pulled out a \$10 gold piece, 'we will each lay \$10 on the table, and the man who talks first shall lose his money.'

"To this Throckmorton consented, and the \$20 were laid beside the stakes of \$1 a side in the middle of the table. Clay then began to play worse than ever. He trumped Throckmorton's ace and threw away his own suit until Throckmorton, who for some time had been gritting his teeth, rose, and, pushing the money at Clay, said: 'Here, take your money. I am not going to let \$20 stand in the way of my telling any such card-playing idiot as you are showing yourself to be what I think of him.' He then went over Clay rough-shod. Clay laughed as he put the two gold pieces in his pocket, and the company laughed with him when he said that he had been trying for years to beat Mr. Throckmorton, and he was glad to feel that he had done so for once."

A GAME FOR A GIRL.

A man from Louisville, who, of course, was called "Colonel," once told the following anecdote:

"I've nevah played any pokah, gentlemen, since befo' the wah," he began. "I used to be, I reckon, one of the most incorrigible pokah

playahs in the South. But I could afford it then, and everybody played. I was a young fellow of twenty-fo' or twenty-five, owned one of the finest plantations in Kaintucky, and had a partnership in tobacco warehouses in Cincinnati and New Orleans. I've lost 'em all, or most all, since—lost most of my property, in fact, with the cause. But at that time, the fall of '58 or the spring of '59, I was about as well fixed as any young man in the South.

“ My business used to take me a great deal to Cincinnati and New Orleans, as you may suppose, and I always went by boat. There were some great vessels on the river then, too—the old Natchez, the Robert E. Lee, the Pensacola, and the old Hayes. They were floating palaces, and the biggest games of pokah I evah sat in or evah expect to see were played in the smoking-rooms and saloons of those boats. There was a regular run of professional gamblers up and down the river, but they were gentlemen, generally squah, as quick to defend their honah as any gentleman, and generally friends of the captains, whō, they say, stood in with their winnings.

“ It was early in the fall of '58, I believe, that I left Cincinnati on one of the down-river fliers at three one afternoon. There was a good passenger list and considerable merchandise aboard.

Among the merchandise I had about twenty as likely mules as evah was foaled that I was goin' to carry to New Orleans an' sell. Among the passengers was an old gentleman from Vahginny with his daughter, a mighty fine-lookin' girl of twenty, and her maid, a likely-lookin' quadroon girl about the same age. I noticed 'em that night an' the next day, foh there wasn't any game till the folks sort of got acquainted along down about Cairo. The young lady was mighty fond of that nigger girl and the maid was mighty devoted to her.

“The night after we left Cairo somebody proposed a little game, an' I an' the old man from Vahginny, who was a rich tobacco-planter, as I found out, agreed to sit in. The other members of the party were one of the regular gamblers, a fellow known as Colonel Somers, an' a nigger-trader from down river somewhars. I had about \$2000 on me an' played with variable luck for an hour or so, till presently along come a jack-pot an' broke me.

“Colonel Somers won it, an' he pinched the old man pretty hard, too. I was a-goin' to quit, but he said : ‘Stay in, sah. Yo' credit is good with me foh the value of that twenty head of mules on the lowah deck.’ An' I stayed. My luck didn't turn, though, an' by two o'clock I had lost every one of those mules. I sat out an'

watched the game. Presently the nigger-trader began to play some pretty hard kyards an' was gettin' into Somers' roll right smart. It run along that way for awhile, an,' his luck leavin' him, he laid back an' played 'em close, about \$3000 ahead of the game.

"The old man from Vahginny had been a-losin' steadily an' seemed all of a sudden to get sort of desperate. He says: 'Gentlemen, I'm \$4000 into this game; I have no mo' money, but I have a mighty likely niggah gal aboard that I'll put up at \$1500 foh a few mo' jack-pots.'

"They both consented, an' the play got pretty hot. It was mighty mean of the old man, I thought, bettin' his daughter's own maid, but he was a born gambler an' had that fiah in him that makes a man let go of his ovahcoat.

"It was five in the morning when that game broke up, an' the old man didn't have a cent. The nigger-tradah had been cashin' his papah an' had made good to Somers. We went on deck, the ole man an' I feelin' pretty blue, he especially bein' all gone to pieces. 'I doan know what I'm a-goin' to do,' he said to me. 'I can get plenty of money in New Orleans, but that isn't heah, an' that niggah-trader gets off at Memphis. I'll have to give him the wench, I reckon, but it'll break Georgia's heart to part with her.'

“Sure enough, at Memphis the trader demanded his property, an’ there was an awful scene. The old man pleaded with him to keep the girl thah till he could raise the money an’ come back, an’ even pretty Miss Georgia begged of him. But, gentlemen, he wouldn’t do it. He insisted on havin’ the girl. I hadn’t the money and couldn’t raise it in Memphis, or I’d have offered it to him. But just as he was leadin’ the pooh, cryin’ thing off the gang-plank up comes Somers, who bows to Miss Georgia an’ says: ‘Pardon me, but if I can advance yo’ father anything it’s at his service.’ The girl thanked him, an’ turned to the ole gentleman. He hated to take it, but Somers insisted, an’ called the trader back.

“‘I’ll give you yo’ money foh that gal,’ he says.

“‘No, thanks, Cunnel : she about suits me, an’ I reckon I’ll keep her.’

“‘She is this young lady’s maid, an’ she wants her,’ urged Somers. ‘I’ll give you \$2000 foh her.’

“‘Not foh twice that,’ said the trader. ‘She’s mine, an’ I’m going to keep her.’

“‘If you do, it will be after I’m dead,’ says Somers, and he steps forward an’ gives the trader a slap across the mouth. Everybody grabbed ’em, and it was decided that the affaih must be

settled right. The trader stayed on the boat till we run to a woodyard six miles below Memphis. When we got there he an' Somers, the captain an' me went ashore. The old gentleman wasn't allowed to go, because he insisted on makin' the fight his own, an' as his daughter was alone except foh him we all couldn't permit it.

“Pistols were chosen, an' I dropped the hat. Both went off at the same moment an' the trader dropped dead. Somers left his remains to be sent home on the up boat, with \$1500 in notes and a letter to his folks, an' we all went aboard the boat again an' on to New Orleans.

“The old gentleman paid Somers there, an' his daughter held both his hands an' thanked him with tears in her eyes. The old man an' I swore off poker-playin' right there together, an' I've nevah played since.

“No, Somers didn't marry the girl, gentlemen; he had a wife in Cincinnati. He went back home, an' when the wah broke out went into the business of runnin' cotton past the blockade an' got rich. I've seen him several times since. He's a prominent merchant of New Orleans now, an' doesn't gamble. That game broke three of us of the habit—fo' in fact, foh the tradah nevah played kyards again.”

“YOU CAN’T BLUFF ME.”

In Richmond, Va., not long since, the story of a great poker game at Savannah, Ga., was told. A party of five met in one of the private parlors of the Scriven House to have a little “draw.” Three were cotton merchants, one an extensive manufacturer of fertilizers, and the fifth a hotel proprietor blessed with a superabundance of wealth. The whole five were “solid men,” or, as the Yankee farmer says, “All wool, and a yard wide,” whose checks were good for any amount. Often during the game these same checks were piled up when all the ready money at the board was staked on a hand. One of the players, generally a hard man to beat on account of his perfect coolness and unbounded pluck, seemed to be unusually unlucky on this occasion, and before the game had become fairly hot he had lost something over \$10,000. Bidding his time, the “Major” waited until several stiff “antes” had been made, and when it came his turn to put up, he laughingly remarked: “Gentlemen, this game is going a little slow. I’ll make it \$1000 to play.” Three of the others saw it, and when his turn came, the Major raised the blind \$1000. This was also “seen” by the others. The Major drew one card for a flush and made a pair of deuces. The second man

drew three cards, the third one card, and the fourth two cards. Each of the others bet a "chip," and the Major \$5000. The second and third men dropped, but the fourth, remarking, "Major, you can't bluff me," raised him \$5000. Without moving a muscle of his face, the Major drew out his book and writing a check for \$25,000, threw it on the pile, saying: "If you think I'm bluffing, come and see that." This was too much for the fertilizer and he laid down three kings, while the Major scooped in the \$42,000.

A GAMBLER'S TRICK.

Señor Cooper, a Mexican onyx king, said this one evening: "Poker is a seductive game, and so I never play it. Still, I know the fine points of the game. One time I was going to Europe in a steamer and witnessed a remarkable game of poker. Some men are born cautious and keep cool under trying circumstances. A well-known lawyer, noted for his scientific way of betting at the poker table, was one of the principals in the game on this steamer. Three other men, supposed to be gentlemen, but one was a professional gambler in disguise, were engaged in the game. It was one of those five-dollar-ante games with no limit. A one-hundred-dollar bet on a pair of trays or deuces was

not uncommon. I knew the lawyer and wanted to tell him that I suspected he was playing against one sharp at least, but I could not get the opportunity. On the afternoon of the first day of the poker game a group of interested spectators stood around the table. I was behind the lawyer's chair. The betting was lively, and the lawyer won \$2000 in ten minutes, and chiefly from the sharper. I saw that the gambler was losing on purpose to bait the lawyer and make a big winning. The gambler dealt the cards and the lawyer got three aces. He drew one card and got another ace.

“Only the five-dollar antes were up and the lawyer sat there with four aces in his hand, the biggest hand that could be dealt except a royal sequence flush, which they had agreed not to play when they began the game. The other players passed out and the lawyer carelessly bet \$5. A little hesitancy on the part of the gambler and he coolly went \$2500 better. The lawyer suspected trickery, but where could it be? He held four aces, an invincible hand, and yet the gambler evidently knew what he was doing to bet so large a sum. It was a trying situation. No one spoke. The lawyer counted out \$2500, but did not put it up. He paused and carefully looked at his five cards again. In an absent-minded way he skinned the five cards through

his hand, when lo ! the trick was exposed. The lawyer had been given six cards by the sharp. The sixth card was carefully glued to the fifth card, and as the cards were made of fine, thin linen, the double thickness was scarcely noticeable. Any player having over five cards when hands are called loses or forfeits all of his rights, even if he has put up all of his money. Well, the gambler's four-ace trick was exposed, and the game closed by the lawyer denouncing him as a blackleg and cheat. It takes nerve to keep from betting four aces. Only a shrewd lawyer would have detected the trick."

A STRAIGHT FLUSH VS. FOURS.

A big game of poker was played on St. Simon's Island, Ga., once. The principal players were Northerners who came over from Savannah for a day. After an hour or so of play, with scarcely enough difference in fortune to warm up the players, a jack-pot was made which was not broken until four or five deals had swelled it to handsome proportions. Young John Z. Merritt, finding three queens in his hand, threw in a twenty-dollar gold piece with great confidence. Jay Hugh Bolton examined his hand and found a pair of jacks and the ten, nine, and seven of diamonds, one of his jacks

being also of that suit. With the alternative of drawing to his four-flush, Bolton remarked that it would cost \$50 to play and posted the cash. All the players threw up their hands except Merritt, who merely saw the raise. Mr. Merritt took one card and got his fourth queen. Mr. Bolton split his jacks, and drawing to his four-flush took in the eight of diamonds, making his hand a straight flush. Mr. Merritt casually remarked that his hand was worth \$1000 and put that amount in the pot.

“My hand is worth \$5000,” said Mr. Bolton, in a tone whose nervousness caused Mr. Merritt to think that perhaps an attempt to bluff was in progress.

“Five thousand more,” said Mr. Merritt.

“Fifteen thousand more,” Mr. Bolton retorted.

“Thirty thousand more,” responded Merritt.

Bolton deliberated a minute, threw an I O U to balance the pot and said, “I call.” “Four queens,” said Merritt, reaching out for the stakes. “Not so fast, if you please—a straight flush,” said Mr. Bolton. Mr. Merritt’s face fell and Mr. Bolton pocketed his winnings, something over \$45,000 on that hand.

HOW A GAME WAS INTERRUPTED.

“Well, I have seen some big poker games at Albany while I was an Assemblyman,” said Smith M. Weed. “The most amusing game of poker I know of occurred during the war at the Delavan House, Albany, in room 454. The late Jacob Sharp, of Broadway surface railroad notoriety, was the occupant of room 454, and he sat around the table with Harry Genet, Henry Smith, and others whom I do not care to mention. Of course there was a great deal of war excitement and the Federal forces were hammering away at Richmond, Va. These poker players were locked in and betting heavily. They were oblivious to war and rumors of war while engaged in such an absorbing game.

“The news came that Richmond had fallen, and a certain Assemblyman rushed along the corridor with several others to the door of room 454. Finding it locked, in an instant the Assemblyman was boosted to the skylight or transom just above the door. He got half way in, balanced for a brief moment, and without warning his friends pushed him headlong into the room. He fell right across the center of the table, the chips flew in every direction, and \$5000 in bills tumbled all over the floor. The legs of the table snapped in two like straws, and

the lucky Assemblyman was on his feet in an instant unhurt. At that moment the door was pushed open, and before a dollar could be picked up the room was filled with men. The poker players got their money, but great excitement prevailed, and much amusement was extracted from the players, who, of course, did not fancy the rude way they were interrupted, even if Richmond had fallen."

"DIGGER" MIKE AND FRANK PAYTON.

A noted man about town in New York once related this experience to me :

"I saw a poker game once that I never will forget. It was in Park City, Utah, in 1865, when the mining boom in the Mormon territory was at its height. One night I dropped into Howard's place to see a friend, and while standing at the bar my attention was drawn to a remote corner of the room by a crowd of men, who seemed to be very much interested in something there. The bar-tender told me that 'Digger' Mike and Frank Payton, a miner and a gambler, were playing poker, and, knowing both men well, I concluded that I'd watch them a few minutes. So I walked over to the corner and took up a position where I could see the players. 'Digger' had five or six stacks of checks and a

big pile of bags containing gold-dust, in all about \$6000 in front of him, while Payton had about \$7000. Both men played cautiously for a while until there was a jack-pot, which 'Digger' opened with a bag of his gold-dust. Payton stayed and raised him \$250, which the 'Digger' saw and went \$500 (in gold-dust) better. Payton just called this, and then skinned his hand and asked for one card. 'Digger' dealt it to him and then threw \$500 worth of his dust into the pot, remarking: 'I don't want any.'

"Payton skinned his hand again, and after going through the usual motions of looking at his antagonist for a few minutes, he saw the \$500 and went it \$500 harder. 'Digger' was more prompt in raising this four bags of dust, and Payton even more promptly saw the raise and went it \$2000 better. Neither man was the least bit nervous according to all outward signs, though each had all his earthly possessions in front of him and in the pot. They continued to raise each other as they made bet after bet, until the 'Digger' shouted for a show-down, saying he couldn't call another cent. Both hands went down on the board at the same moment, and then Payton reached over and began to scoop in the gold-dust and checks. He had a pair of fours, while the 'Digger' had been bluffing on a kilter. 'I didn't think you had nerve enough

to follow me, Frank,' was all he said as he got up from the table to leave the place to go back to the diggings to toil for more gold-dust. The sequel of the game is interesting. Payton left the saloon, too, after disposing of his winnings to his satisfaction, and that was the last time he was seen until his body was picked up a week or two later in a ravine about a mile from Howard's. His skull was crushed and his money all gone, showing that he had fallen a victim to somebody's cupidity. His murderer was never discovered."

"AIN'T YOU BETTING A LEETLE HIGH?"

Jim Joralemon was a Mississippi River steamboat clerk and something of a poker player in an amateur way. One night when he arrived in New Orleans—about a year ago it was—he was introduced by a friend of his to a poker party at a private club. Jim went into the game quite innocently and played away until he had lost \$300 or \$400, every cent he had in the world. About this time he began to find out that, although the game was high, very little money was being put up—in fact, every one was playing more or less on wind. This made Jim mad, for he saw that he had lost his money without having a show to win any. So he turned the thing about in his mind for a while

to see how he could get back what he had lost. Finally there came a big jack-pot which a man named Wilkins, or Bilkins, who sat on the opposite side of the table, opened for a considerable amount. Jim came in, and, after the draw, raised it.

"I raise you \$500," said Bilkins, throwing an I O U for that amount into the middle of the table.

Jim combed over his cards carefully. He had only a pair of deuces ; but he was as grave as a judge, and, for all you could tell, he might have had four aces in his hand.

"I raise you \$30,000," he said, and threw a piece of paper with his autograph on it into the pot. His worldly wealth at that moment consisted of just twenty-five cents in coppers.

Mr. Bilkins turned a trifle pale. "Ain't you betting a leetle high, Mr. Joralemon?" he inquired, with some hesitation.

"No higher than I'm in the habit of betting, Mr. Bilkins," replied Jim, cool as a cucumber.

Mr. Bilkins was staggered. He laid down his hand—it had three kings in it—and Jim raked in the boodle. There was about \$350 cash in it, besides the I O U's. So Jim excused himself, saying he had an engagement, and got out, delighted to escape with his original capital.

A STORY FROM VIRGINIA CITY.

They had a poker game once in Virginia City, Nevada, in the back room of Jicarilla Bob's place, who was present to see that everything was fair. The men at the table were Tom Sinsabaugh, a cattle dealer, and Potter Abert, Omaha Throup, and Pap Williams, gamblers. The game had been going along for some time without much excitement and with no very large winnings, when suddenly Pap Williams, who had thrown down two cards, offered to go it blind for \$50. The others saw him, and a crowd that had assembled at the bar moved over to see how the thing would come out. All the others drew three cards each. Williams ran his cards over carelessly, called for a drink, and, with a cigar in one corner of his mouth, said he would bet \$50. All the others stayed in, and on the show-down, no one manifesting a disposition to raise it, it appeared that there were five aces out, Pap Williams having three and Potter Abert two. This discovery came very near resulting in war, but at the suggestion of Jicarilla Bob the pot was left up and a new deal was had, he taking the extra ace and tearing it up.

After the new deal Abert called for four cards, Sinsabaugh for three, Throup for three, and Williams for two. There was now more than

\$400 in the pot, and as Abert offered to bet \$50 the others felt that they would have to see him. When it came around to Abert again he concluded to raise the terms a little, and he put up \$100. This caused old man Sinsabaugh to draw out, with the remark that the water was getting too deep for a man with a little pair. The other two saw the raise and called. Down came the cards, and almost simultaneously with their appearance was the crack of a revolver, and Potter Abert fell out of his chair, while Pap Williams, gun in hand, reached over and swept in the pile of money. On the table in front of where Abert was lying were five cards, three of them aces, while in front of Williams were two aces, one of them being a duplicate of one in the hand of the man under the table.

A JOKE ON FLORENCE.

Mr. W. J. Florence, the well-known actor, relates this anecdote :

“While poker is considered a national game, I must confess that I have seen it played chiefly in an international way, *i. e.*, on board British steamships carrying American passengers. I only play cards *en route* to Europe to pass away the time—nothing else, and then I do not gamble. Once, some years ago, I was playing a

theatrical engagement in Louisville, Ky., and I was invited to visit and participate in a late supper after the performance was over. Among those who were to be at supper was Henry Wagstaff. The theatrical performance was very long and it was near midnight when I reached the bachelor apartments. I had no sooner arrived than I noticed some little excitement among the gentlemen present. It seems that a game of draw had ended and a count was being made of moneys. I had no alternative but to await developments, and they came soon enough. A big dispute arose across the table, and in an instant Wagstaff was on his feet, pistol in hand, and trying to aim at his antagonist, a well-known gentleman. I knew that blood was going to be shed right there, so I jumped up and threw my arms around the editor. Others caught his arm and kept it up so if the pistol were discharged it would only damage the ceiling.

“The other gentleman was ferocious, and although he was held by strong men I thought he would break loose every second and fire right into us. Great beads of perspiration stood out upon my forehead. I pleaded with the Kentuckian not to shoot: that he would regret it. The more I pleaded and tried to keep his pistol arm up the more he attempted to break away.

Every instant I expected to hear the crack, crack of revolvers and to see the reeling form of a man perforated with a large bullet. I pictured the direful consequences and the blame. The latter would partially, at least, rest upon me, because I was the guest of the evening and the gathering was in my honor. In our struggle to keep the two men apart tables were overturned, chairs were knocked down, and the money on the table somehow disappeared like magic. Finally I caught Wagstaff's pistol in my hand; and then the lamentable truth flashed like an electric shock through me, to wit: I was being guyed and the whole fight was concocted to fool me. The pistol was nothing but a bootjack, one that is small and when folded resembles the shape of a pistol. I was completely taken in, and I need scarcely say that the 'smiles' were on me. That was the most exciting game of poker that I **ever** indulged in."

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